

THE MAGAZINE OF THE REAL WORLD

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Winter 1992

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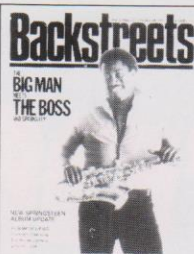
Backstreets

**BRUCE
JOHNNY
& STEVEN
& MAX, TOO!**

**INTERVIEWS WITH
SOUTHSIDE JOHNNY
LITTLE STEVEN
AND MIGHTY MAX!
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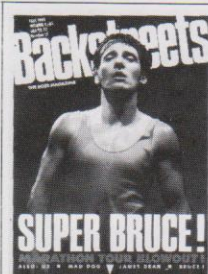
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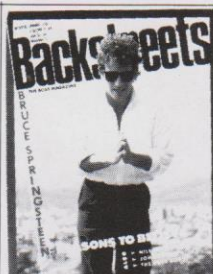
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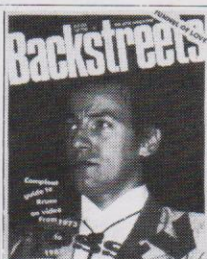
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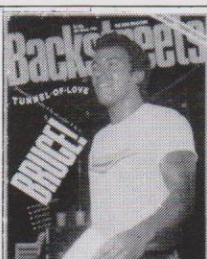
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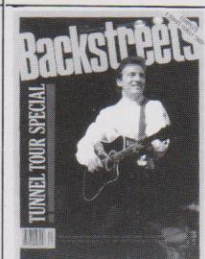
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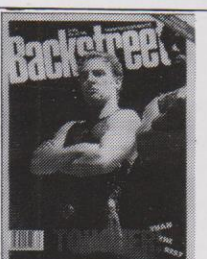
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Charles R. Cross

Associate Editors
Erik Flannigan, Jonathan B. Pont, Robert Santelli

Contributors
Grant Alden, Robert Allen, Scott Byron, Randy Cepuch, Art Chantry, David Day, David DuBois, Lynn Elder, Jimmy Guterman, Dan Halligan, Jared Houser, Josh Jacobson, Phil and Steve Jump, Ruth Kelly, Ermanno Labianca, Jeff McDermott, Jim Ragsdale, Bernie Ranellone, Debra L. Rothenberg, Mike Saunders, Arlen Schumer, Joe Schwind, James Shive, Billy Smith, Mark Stricherz, Rinaldo Tagliabue, Marty Venturo, Bob Zimmerman, Abby and many others, all over the world, whose help has been essential.

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CONTENTS

3 8
Vol. 10, No. 2
Winter 1992
Happy New Year

Backstreets

Features

- SOUTHSIDE JOHNNY**
The Backstreets Interview by Robert Santelli..... **12**
- MAX WEINBERG**
The Backstreets Interview by Robert Santelli..... **18**
- LITTLE STEVEN**
The Backstreets Interview by Robert Santelli..... **24**

Departments

- LETTERS**
To the editors of Backstreets..... **4**
- ON THE BACKSTREETS**
Ten wishes for the New Year by Charles R. Cross..... **7**
- GREETINGS FROM ASBURY PARK, N.J.**
By Robert Santelli..... **8**
- ON LIPS**
Rockin' tunes for the modern world..... **9**
- IN THE NEWS**
New album in March, tour to follow?..... **10**
- IN THE NEWS**
The Jukes on tour, Eliot/Appel book delayed..... **11**
- ON DISC**
Forgotten Songs joins the five star club..... **30**
- ON COLLECTING**
New title round-up, boot guide reviewed..... **31**
- ON DISC**
Southside imports, Santa Claus promo..... **32**
- CLASSIFIEDS**
Pen pals, messages and tapes galore..... **33**

Cover

BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN
Stone Pony, Asbury Park, NJ,
September 26, 1991
Photo by Larry Busacca/Retna Ltd.

Off the Wall

BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN
Chicago, IL
November 20, 1980
Photo by Mark Fletcher

LETTERS

FIND ONE FACE

Dear Editor:

I've been with you since the beginning and a fan since 1975, so why stop now?

I must admit some doubts creeping in. Of course, Bruce is as important as ever, but other peoples' fanaticism is beginning to get a bit scary.

For example:

1) Collecting is supposed to be fun. Has it just become another big business? Some dealers and buyers are real jerks. Money, money, money!

2) Is Bruce collecting just another American status symbol, the "I own" syndrome?

3) Are Bruce fans becoming like the Elvis geeks, worshipping his every move?

4) Bruce was always about inspiration, he has recently done his share in regard to social issues. But what of Bruce's fans? What are they doing? Do they write Congress? Did they protest the Gulf War? Are they active in shelters for the home-

less? For battered women? For the elderly?

Isn't this what Bruce is about? Or is it about seeing every show? Or following him around until you have your picture taken with him?

I have met the greatest people in the world through Bruce and the worst...the number of jerks seems to rise.

We'll hope for the best..

Ron Wells
Corona Del Mar, CA

GET UP STAND UP

Dear Editor:

Your recent editorial "The Waiting" articulated what is on many fan's minds, especially during these times when we anticipate a new album at any moment. But what may have been lost in the flood are the particular ideals of the artist. Springsteen has the distinction of being the only artist in 35 plus years of rock 'n' roll music who has yet to put out a bad album. Though the albums themselves are few, they are filled with songs that, at the time, speak for the moment but eventually transcend the

moment and become words for a generation.

A bootleg compilation sounds great on paper, but we are in no position to ask for it merely because the songs are good and the idea is marketable.

Joe in D.C. states that we might have to wait for Bruce to die before these songs see the light of day. This is quite a pessimistic view of the intentions of his favorite musician. I contend that Springsteen will continue to create and release in the same manner as he has done in the past; and eventually, like with releases of the live set or *Nebraska*, he may surprise us when the time is right. To ask for any more is unfair from someone who has given so much.

Joseph Lahr
Manchester, NH

LOST IN THE FLOOD

Dear Editor:

As someone who has seen Bruce perform live 30 times since the summer of 1978, enriching the coffers of the viper-like ticket scalpers in the

process, and who has invested thousands of American dollars in bootleg video and audio recordings to compensate for the dearth of official releases, I am finally moved to inquire as to just what the hell is going on?

It has been four years since the last album and the only Bruce product I've been privy to is an uneven flow of newswire photos depicting Bruce clad in the obese Mojo's peasant shirt from the cover of *Absolutely Live*. Is he just auditioning for the Smithereens or is he actively cultivating the Captain Lou Albano look? Or is he simply honoring the legacy of Bart Giamatti by replicating the late baseball commissioner's visage and hairstyle? As to what *Rolling Stone* called the "follow-up" to *Tunnel of Love*, (calling this the follow-up is like calling the SALT II Treaty the follow-up to the Magna Carta), I have a few theories of my own:

1) Bruce has re-enrolled in Ocean County Community College in pursuit of a four year degree (his mom did ask him to go back to college, as he said before "Growin' Up" in '78).

2) Bruce now lives in his own little world in which he's constantly releasing albums that only he can hear (there may be something to this).

3) There are incredibly strange things going on in this man's life that we can't even begin to guess at.

4) Bruce is dead (scratch that — dead artists like the Doors, Elvis, and Roy Orbison are much more prolific than Bruce).

5) He just doesn't give a damn.

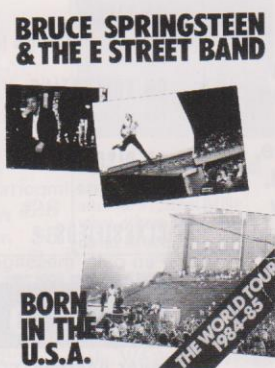
Is Lex Luthor Landau such an omnipotent spin doctor that he can quash any "where is Bruce?" articles?

Anthony Fischetti
Cos Cob, CT

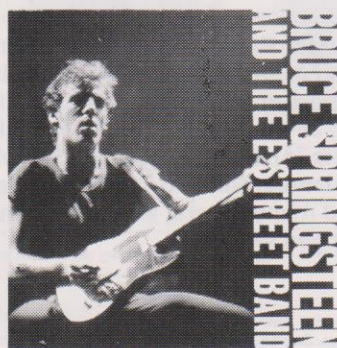
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OUT IN THE STREET

Dear Editor:

This is just to let everyone know that Gary U.S. Bonds is still out there rocking. I just caught him on the last of Albany's free seasonal street concerts, "Alive at Five." Gary played right downtown and he

and his backing band, the Cruisers, sounded great! The crowd of 2,000 danced to such hits as "New Orleans," "Quarter to Three," "Stand By Me," and most of the *Dedication* album. He opened with a Bruce tune that I just wish I could hear Bruce himself do again, "Action in the Streets." He also did "Rendezvous," "Glory Days" and others. Gary gave the crowd a happy hour show that lasted 90 minutes and proved he could still rock with the best. This was a bit of good old Jersey Shore music that helped clear the "Summertime Blues" for a transplanted guy from Jersey spending his first time away from home.

Jim Loftus
Albany, NY

BOUND FOR GLORY

Dear Editor:

I commend you on a great magazine: it's one of the only things that lets us know that there really is a Bruce Springsteen still out there. Apart from the two Christic shows, it has been over three years since Bruce went out on the road. I think it's totally inconsiderate of him leaving us without a record or any shows. We should have deserted him by now. Yet I know that when the record is released, and tour dates announced, I'll be there in line for a piece of gold along with thousands of others. I wonder if Bruce realizes how it feels when other stars release records and do tours every year? Despite this, I know that this release and tour, like all the rest, will be worth the wait.

Lesley Hutchinson
Rockville, MD

TWO HEARTS

Dear Editor:

This letter is in response to Joe Schwind's letter to the editor in *Backstreets* #37. First of all, let me state that Bruce Springsteen is my favorite artist; 50 years down the line I would still consider him my favorite.

Like Mr. Schwind, I agree that waiting for Bruce to finish his new record is at times frustrating. His statement, though,

concerning the so-called "90 percent" who forget about Bruce when he's not touring and go on to Guns 'N' Roses or Phil Collins struck me as odd. It sounds to me that Mr. Schwind has a problem with the concepts of "expanding your horizons" and "commitment." Just because I am presently not into any Bruce albums as much as I am into the new G 'N' R albums or the new Metallica, John Mellencamp, or Public Enemy albums (I could go on), it does not mean in the least that I have lost my affection for Bruce's music. I pride myself on being able to enjoy all kinds of music and the fact that I am presently not listening to *Darkness* ten times a day doesn't mean Bruce's music is out of my life. I will never consider myself a "bandwagon rider."

Also, if Mr. Schwind does not like the fact that Bruce wants to take his time and release the best possible album, then I might suggest that he listen to albums by such "enterprises" as C&C Music Factory, Black Box, and Snap, where the primary motive is to make money, and the creative control of the artists who actually make the music and appear in the videos to promote the "product" is close to zero.

Michael Bournazian
Montreal, Quebec

MY HOMETOWN

Dear Editor:

In "My Hometown," Bruce Springsteen sings of "fights between the black and white" of a shotgun blast.

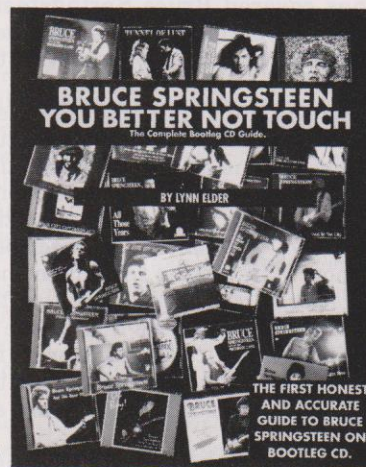
Those lines describe what happened here about a month ago. Four guys shot at a house where an immigrant lives. Luckily, he wasn't hit. Even worse, they weren't punished. All they got was a warning.

The town's main employer went bankrupt and decided to close their factory, one of Norway's biggest and it was the backbone of our town; everything was built around it. Even my father will lose his job. Others are older and won't find new work as easily. I guess I'll leave when I finish school in 1993.

Martin Lillemaehlum
Moelv, Norway

THE COMPLETE BOOTLEG CD GUIDE

Imported from the UK, this is the first comprehensive guide to Springsteen on bootleg compact discs. *You Better Not Touch* includes complete reviews of the over 70 titles available, with photos of each cover, complete and accurate song lists, source and time information, and fair and honest ratings of both sound quality and packaging. *You Better Not Touch* is expected to vary up-to-date, providing the most accurate guide yet to Springsteen on bootleg CD.



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About Backstreets Magazine

Backstreets is a quarterly magazine that covers the music of Bruce Springsteen and other Jersey Shore performers. The magazine began in 1980 and over the years has covered Bruce Springsteen's recordings and performances more extensively than any other publication in the world.

Backstreets appears generally every three or four months though the actual publication date is affected by breaking news, tour coverage and the occasional special issue. Each issue of the magazine is progressively numbered. Subscribers can tell how many issues remain on their current subscription by looking at the number that appears above their name on their mailing label. If that number (it follows an "X") is the same number as the latest issue, your subscription has expired.

Unlike most larger, consumer magazines, **Backstreets** does not have the resources to continually bombard subscribers with renewal mailings so we appreciate our subscribers taking note of their expiration date and renewing when appropriate. You can renew your subscription at any time, and your prompt and early renewal is a great aid to us. Since **Backstreets** carries very little paid advertising, subscription revenue and sales of back issues and books are the only real income the magazine has so by subscribing or renewing you help us with this admittedly modest effort and showing your support.

Backstreets is available on a limited number of select newstands around the nation, though newstand availability is not something you can count on in most areas. If you're interested in the magazine, we highly recommend that you consider subscribing since subscribers are offered numerous benefits (see Hotline section below), in addition to the convenience of getting **Backstreets** hot off the press and at a discount from the cover price.

Stores interested in carrying **Backstreets** can contact our office: Though the magazine's audience is select, the sell-through percentage is extremely high and the magazine is offered to distributors on a guaranteed full return basis. **Backstreets** is also handled by a number of independent distributors including Ingram, IPD and Performance Records.

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The Backstreets Hotline

To keep our subscribers updated with the current information during the time between issues, **Backstreets** provides a 24 hour a day information phone message, called the **Backstreets** Hotline. The Hotline is updated at least every week and contains all the latest available information on album releases, tour dates and appearances. There is no charge at present for the Hotline, though callers will pay the normal long distance charges if you are out of our calling area. The line gets hundreds of calls each week so calling at off hours is the best way to access it.

The phone number to the **Backstreets** Hotline is unlisted and unpublished since because of the high volume of calls the service can only be provided to current subscribers of the magazine. To assure that the service is only made available to those subscribers, the number to the Hotline is printed on the mailing sheet that goes to subscribers with each issue. We do change the number frequently to insure that the service is only accessed by those who are current subscribers (the number does occasionally get passed around by fans and even has been announced on the radio which causes the lines to be overloaded with non-subscribers who don't help support the service). If you're unsure of the present number for the Hotline and you are a current subscriber drop us an SASE, and we'll send it to you.

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Sub membership can be found on the inside back page.

Love letters, hate mail, etc.

Backstreets is very much a forum for the ideas and input of the many subscribers who contribute to the effort each issue. Letters to the editor are always welcome and we read them all and publish as many as space permits. Clips and xeroxes of news items sent in by subscribers are essential in helping us keep the magazine and hotline informative. Due to the number of inquiries we receive we cannot always answer every letter but we do respond to all who send in a SASE with their inquiry.

Backissues and past glories

Backstreets is the longest running Springsteen fanzine and it has been in business for over 11 years. The total number of pages we've published over the years represents the single largest chunk of Bruce Springsteen information ever compiled under one roof. Though many of the earliest issues are sold out and command high prices on the collector's market, a number of back issues are still available at reasonable prices until supplies are depleted. You'll find an order form in this issue of back issues still available or call our office.

In late 1989 a collection of some of the best articles from the magazine was published in the hardback book, **Backstreets, Springsteen: The Man and His Music** from Harmony Books. This 224 page book collects some of the best from past issues of **Backstreets** and also includes an extensive discography and a complete listing of all concerts Bruce Springsteen has ever performed. The book contains over 150 photographs of Springsteen, many in full color, and most have never been published before. *Record Collector* magazine described the book as "Wonderful, the best possible buy for the Springsteen convert," while the *Asbury Park Press* called the selection of photos "brilliant." The book is available in finer bookstores or by mail by calling **Backstreets** Orderline at (206) 728-7603.

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Boxed Sets and Scalpers

The Wish

I didn't want to eat any french fries during 1991 yet I ate them on a dozen or so occasions. I had hoped to make it the entire year fry-less, but God did not have mercy on this man who was unsure.

I write this a week before the end of 1991, when I'll make another New Year's resolution, which I will also break (man was not meant to live without fries). You'll read this in 1992, and, if you're like me, you'll have broken your resolutions by now. I try not to be too hard on myself, or on others, because we are fallible beings.

Readers often refer to this column in letters and phone calls as our "editorial" page. Most editorial pages feature opinions or endorsements of ideas and legislation, whereas this column usually concerns how some specific element of Bruce Springsteen's work relates to my life. But with this issue, I thought I might present a list of ten wishes I have for 1992 (remember Bruce did a song called "The Wish" at the Christic shows). Some involve Springsteen or his management, some concern fans, and some are applicable for both the readers of this magazine and your neighbors. These are my fantasies of ten things I would change if I were Jeannie on "I Dream of Jeannie." Think of them as resolutions for the collective conscience of Bruce Springsteen fans.

1. *I wish Southside and Little Steven hit the top of the charts.* If you like Springsteen's music, you owe it to yourself to explore the many other performers who have influenced Bruce or, in turn, have been influenced by him. I can't understand why Bruce Springsteen can sell 17 million records but Dave Alvin can only sell 70,000, but that's the record business. If you support the Jersey Shore sound, then buy the excellent new Southside album, Max's Killer Joe album, and pick up the back

catalog from Southside, Little Steven, and U.S. Bonds as a start. Don't forget about CCR.

2. *I wish for a B-sides CD.* CBS/Sony has had a part to play in some of the frustrations of being a Springsteen fan over the past few years. A B-sides CD should be available, to spotlight already released work on one quality disc. Springsteen officially released "The Big Payback" overseas: Why can't fans buy this release on a CD compilation? Some of this material is now available on a scattered collection of different radio shows and imports, but collecting them is difficult and gets very expensive.

3. *I wish for new interviews.* When Bruce finally releases a new record, I hope he does extensive interviews, which would go far in clearing up some of the misconceptions and distortions of the past few years (i.e. the E Street Band break-up, the Batlan suit, the dramatic Christic shows, his new work). In the '80s, Bruce only gave a handful of interviews and most were with television reporters and proved less than illuminating. Bob Dylan recently gave one of the best interviews of his life to a small LA-based mag called *SongTalk* and Dylan's openness and intelligence went a long way towards silencing his many critics.

4. *I wish tickets weren't so hard to get.* The Grateful Dead years ago established a ticket ordering system that has proven itself to be a fair choice for getting tickets to their loyal audience. A certain number of tickets to every show are reserved for mail order buyers, giving fans all over the nation a chance at these before scalpers get them. A mail order system is the best way to beat scalping, although Springsteen has addressed this onstage, his tours remain a bonanza for ticket scalpers. He could stop scalpers with a little organization and effort and help his fans at the same time.

5. *I wish scalpers disappeared.* Springsteen's audience could also fight scalping if they refused to patronize these criminals. Many fans talk about the evils of scalping but they still pay outrageous prices, perpetuating the corrupt system. If every subscriber to this magazine wrote their state legislature a letter today to demand an end to legal scalping, the voice would be heard.

6. *I wish for a boxed set.* Since this is a wish list, let me go out on a limb: I'd love to see a whole series of official releases of live recordings. Again, the Dead lead the way with their official releases titled *From the Vault*, but other artists like Frank Zappa and Paul McCartney have gotten wise and started releasing their own concert recordings in small runs. The bootlegging explosion proves there is a demand and the *Live* set, in my opinion, was not the answer. How about a series of live albums, each capturing an entire show from every tour?

7. *I wish for news.* As a letter to the editor in this issue so wisely points out, Springsteen doesn't owe his audience an album within any certain time table. Still, it is reasonable to expect Springsteen's organization to occasionally issue a press release updating whatever progress or news there is on recording. With four years passing since Springsteen's last release, plus a considerable erosion of his hardcore group of fans, Bruce's organization needs to become more "user-friendly." The most concrete piece of information on the upcoming album to come out in 1991 was when Springsteen told a parking attendant to expect the record soon. When news ends up getting leaked from valets, a communication problem exists. Other musicians do better at keeping their fans involved: The Grateful Dead run their own information line. With Bruce so far out of the spotlight

during the past few years, he needs to start communicating or he'll risk alienating the audience that has patiently awaited albums and tours.

8. *I wish people weren't so milk-toast.* If there is any message I've gotten from Springsteen's music over the years, it is the importance of personal expression. Part of the reason our country is in the shape we find it today is because too few people dare to express an opinion about anything. Voice your opinion on issues, on politics, on the environment, even if it is just among your peer group. Support the right of anyone who dares to stand behind an intelligent opinion, even if you don't agree with the opinion, because it is only through an open debate that we will ever achieve social change. You can no longer passively support the things you believe in because some of those things are getting lost every day and free speech is one of them.

9. *I wish people stood for something, and that includes Bruce Springsteen.* It's easy in this world to let cynicism overwhelm you and to resign yourself that things won't change — and that goes for everything from Congressional scandals to CBS's crummy CD singles. Despite what may seem like overwhelming odds, personal integrity counts for something in this world. Don't be afraid to be an example and don't be afraid of human connection (which I argue is one of the main reasons for this magazine). I hope in 1992 Bruce Springsteen does more to make his political message be heard, loud, clear, and unadulterated.

10. *I wish french fries had never been invented.* Don't lose your sense of humor, whether reading this magazine or driving on the freeway. And whatever you do, don't eat any greasy french fries. Rest assured that none will touch my lips in '92 — at least that's what I'm saying today.

—Charles R. Cross



Bruce, Steven, and Southside Reunite

Last Call at the Stone Pony?

By Robert Santelli

Just when it looked as if the Asbury Park music scene was on the verge of a long-awaited comeback, its legendary club, the Stone Pony, was suddenly ordered closed October 1st by a bankruptcy court trustee. Beset by mounting debts, the Pony had filed for protection from its creditors under Chapter 11 of the Federal Bankruptcy Act back in 1989. But Ron Quintero, the court-appointed trustee handling the Pony case, closed the club this fall because of its inability to turn a profit. "They (Stone Pony owners Butch Pielka and Jack Roig) can't keep losing money," Quintero told the *Asbury Park Press*.

Ironically, the Pony closing came less than a week after perhaps its most memorable show in years. History was made at the club on September 26 when, during the shooting of Southside Johnny's new video, "It's Been a Long Time," Southside, Bruce Springsteen, Little Steven, and Jon Bon Jovi, backed by members of the E Street Band and Asbury Jukes, all performed together on the Pony stage. It marked the only time that all four of the Shore's favorite rock 'n' roll sons have appeared on the same stage together, at the Pony or anywhere else.

In addition to filming the video, the All-Star band performed two riveting sets, prompting E Street Band drummer Max Weinberg to remark, "From where I was sitting, you'd think that nothing had passed in 15 years. I guess what it really proved is that you can take the boys out of New Jersey, but you can't take New Jersey out of the boys."

There were a couple of other shows at the Pony before it was padlocked: the very last one was a benefit on September 29 for Susan Lastovica, a member of the blues-rock group the



Fairlanes, who has been sick and unable to perform with the popular Shore band for over a year. But the video shoot was what may prove to be the last great moment in a club that had seen more than its share of tremendous rock 'n' roll.

Since its inception in 1974, the Stone Pony was the club from which the Shore's rhythm and blues-based rock scene originated. Not only was the club the favorite hang-out of everyone from Springsteen on down, but the club's blue-collar ambiance was the perfect backdrop for the Jersey Shore sound they helped make famous.

During the Pony's heyday in the mid and late '70s, you could go to the club on any given night and catch a spontaneous jam that featured the Boss or any of the Shore's growing stars. On Memorial Day in 1976, a live broadcast of the Jukes' debut album, *I Don't Want*

to Go Home, occurred at the Pony and brought the club national exposure. In 1984 Springsteen and the E Street Band kicked off their *Born in the USA* tour from the Pony stage. In short, the Stone Pony was a great American rock 'n' roll club, known not just on the Shore, but the world over, for its musical legacy.

Don't, however, close the club's coffin just yet, says longtime Pony spokesman Lee Mrowicki. According to the DJ, it is quite possible that sometime in the future the Pony will re-open its doors under new ownership. "The club and its name are for sale," said Mrowicki, "and there are some people who seem interested." The asking price? About a million dollars. "We've gotten lots of phone calls," said Mrowicki, whose relationship with the club extends all the way back to the early '70s, "but no deal has been made yet."

Mrowicki said that whoever purchases the Pony should keep its legacy intact. "The Pony stands for something special when it comes to rock 'n' roll. It would be a sin for someone to buy the Pony and make it into something it never was — just another ordinary club."

Interestingly, just as the Pony closed, the Paramount Theatre, Asbury Park's best concert hall, re-opened after undergoing major renovation. The Paramount's first show of the '90s featured jazz keyboard whiz Chick Corea and his Elektric Band. However, the show's promoter, Susan Jameson, said the Paramount would present more than just jazz shows in the future. "We hope to bring in as many rock acts as we do jazz," explained Jameson. Shows already booked include those by Crowded House and the Psychedelic Furs.

Speaking of good shows, Max Weinberg hosted one in September at the Hard Rock Cafe in New York City. Billed as a benefit for the Big Brother organization Weinberg has been part of for years, the event was also a showcase for the album Weinberg recently recorded with the group Killer Joe. Called *Scene of the Crime*, the album is filled with guest appearances (see interview) and fueled with a highly charged R&B sensibility that kept the Hard Rock Cafe crowd on its feet for the band's entire set. Helping Max celebrate his debut as producer: Jersey singer Phoebe Snow, drum great Louie Bellson, and Southside Johnny, all of whom stepped up onstage for a little impromptu rocking.

In the Hard Rock Cafe crowd that night was John Eddie, who reported that he's in the final stages of completing his long awaited third album. According to Eddie, the as-yet-untitled work should be in record stores late in the winter. He's now on Elektra Records.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 33

IMPACT RECORDS PHOTO

I FOUGHT THE LAW: The lawsuit filed by former roadies Mike Batlan and Doug Sutphin against Bruce Springsteen was settled out of court in early September. The plaintiffs alleged that Springsteen owed them thousands of dollars in overtime pay from the *Born in the USA* tour and that he had reneged on a verbal contract that would have paid the two slightly less than the members of the E Street Band. As part of the settlement, the terms of which were not disclosed, Springsteen agreed to drop a countersuit in which he claimed that Batlan had bootlegged unreleased material and stolen handwritten lyrics and notes, a charge Batlan flatly denied. Days before the case was to go to trial, Springsteen's lawyers sought to limit the scope of the suit by having the section that dealt with the alleged verbal contract dismissed. It appeared that Superior Court Judge Florence R. Peskoe would have granted "some relief" to Springsteen on this issue, and thus substantially weakened Batlan's claim. Before she was set to rule on this issue, however, the two sides settled. Although the terms are confidential, sources speculated that Batlan and Sutphin were paid somewhere in the neighborhood of \$350,000 each.

BE TRUE: "Bruce Springsteen bounces back with his first release of the Nineties — and we've got an exclusive pre-release copy!" So went the story in the *New Times*, a weekly publication in Miami, Florida. A feature in the November 13, 1991, issue detailed an alleged new album from Springsteen entitled *Parking Free*, and set off a firestorm of both interest and controversy. Avid Springsteen fan and *New Times* writer Greg Baker simply grew impatient waiting for the new album. So, Baker, along with fellow staffer Ben Greenman, opened a computer file and, over a three or four day period, crafted an "album" that they could then

"review." Said Baker, "I'd written about him since college, and I was impatient to write something. The thing I kept in mind was what I would write when the album really did come out. The whole time, I kept thinking, 'Let's pretend it's real.'" Attention to detail included guest appearances by Little Steven, Southside Johnny, and John Prine, a bogus interview with Springsteen who "consented" to a five minute telephone conversation, and even a likeness of the album cover. Baker told *Backstreets* that he hadn't gotten any heat for the story, but concedes nevertheless that callers to the *New Times* were disappointed when they learned that the story was a spoof. The 12 songs on the album included "Parallel on the Boardwalk," "True Steel Man," and "Hell Drives a Lincoln."

DOWNBOUND TRAIN: As if 1984 wasn't bad enough, the inevitable election year co-opting has recurred. In his campaign kick-off in Lincoln, Nebraska, US Senator Bob Kerrey (D) ascended a flag-draped platform with "Born to Run" blaring over the PA system. Kerrey, a Vietnam veteran and Congressional Medal of Honor recipient, was the fourth Democrat to announce and the first one to use a Springsteen theme. He certainly has one up on either Ronald Reagan or Walter Mondale, both of whom shamelessly tried to exploit Springsteen's burgeoning popularity in '84: Kerrey attended Springsteen's concert in Lincoln that year. . . *Dead Elvis: A Chronicle of A Cultural Obsession* (Doubleday), is the new book from writer Greil Marcus. Marcus, who has written extensively about Springsteen for such publications as *Artforum* and *New West*, traces the connection between the King and popular culture since his death in 1977. Springsteen is mentioned several times throughout the book. . . *Peace of the Action* is a book of poetry written by twenty-two year old Michael J. Mulroy and published by Joyce A. Rommel, both avid Springsteen fans. The collection deals with the issues surrounding the Vietnam war. The volume has won favorable reviews from groups rang-



Bryan Adams and a subscriber with their favorite Boss magazine.

ing from the Vietnam Veterans of America to the National League of Families. For further information, write to K&J Management Services, PO Box 7079, Freeport, New York, 11520.

SPARKS FLY: Bette Midler recently took Bruce Springsteen to task for not granting her permission to release "Pink Cadillac" before he did. In recent interviews with *Vanity Fair* and *Movieline*, Midler rips both Jon Landau for saying she "couldn't sing" and Springsteen, "another stiff," for not letting her use "Pink Cadillac." She had been working with Chuck Plotkin, who she claims said it would be fine to release the song. When Springsteen overruled Plotkin, Midler was infuriated. Based on her remarks, it sounds to us like Midler hasn't a leg to stand on. After all, she never asserts that Springsteen had agreed to give her the song; why should she be surprised when he elected to be the first to release one of his own songs?

I GOT THE RADIO ON: In timely holiday spirit, Little Steven, Southside Johnny, and Bobby Bandiera took to the airwaves on New York radio station K-ROCK in late November as part of the World Hunger Year's Hungerthon. For a donation of \$100, listeners could make a request and the musicians would play it live over the radio. The trio performed "Secret Agent Man," the Dobie Gray classic "Drift Away," and, oddly, Billy Joel's "She's Always a Woman." One

caller asked Steven to do "Forever," but he had quite a time trying to remember just how the song went. He finally had the station's engineer play the track from the album. Let's hope that the station played more from *Men Without Women* after Steve left. . . Max Weinberg appeared in early December on Ed Sciaky's Sunday Night Alternative on Philadelphia radio station WYSP. Max played tunes from the Killer Joe album and took phone calls on the air, including one during which Max suggested that Springsteen include "Loose Ends" and "This Hard Land" on a *Bootleg Series* set, should Springsteen ever decide to release one. We couldn't agree more. . . Nils Lofgren's recent European tour included six nights in Germany. The show included a new song called "Blue Skies" and a cover of Jimmy Reed's "Baby Please Don't Go." Nils played several dates in Japan and appeared at Neil Young's fifth annual Bridge School Benefit Concert in San Francisco. In addition to performing his own set, Nils sat in for Neil Young's set, which included a moving performance of Young's "Birds" for the late Bill Graham. . . Clarence Clemmons appeared at Seattle's annual Bumbershoot Festival, opening for the Neville Brothers at Seattle Center Coliseum. Art Neville sat in on keyboards during the Big Man's set, which included "Pink Cadillac" and "Woman's Got the Power," a King Curtis song, and, notably, several new songs. No word on a new record from Clarence. ♣

Just Around the Corner . . .

New Springsteen Album by Spring

Has it really been over four years since Bruce Springsteen released an album? Although Springsteen has never taken longer between releases, considerable evidence suggests the wait is nearly over. While Springsteen's penchant for secrecy is matched perhaps only by Woody Allen, some information has gotten out.

All indications point to an album that picks up musically where *Tunnel of Love* left off. Sources who heard either bits and pieces or all of it say that it is roughly divided between flat-out rockers in the vein of *The River* ("Two Hearts") and mid-tempo numbers like "One Step Up." One consistent report is that the music has a more country feel to it (though this was also widely said about *Tunnel of Love* before its release) while still retaining a familiar E Street Band sound. Many have suggested that the material debuted at the Christic Institute shows provided a glimpse of the album, but those shows took place over a year ago — an eternity for a given Springsteen song to remain on the front burner (consider the fates of "Don't Look Back" or "Loose Ends," songs recorded early in the process for the respective albums on which they never surfaced). Based on the belief that the new album will be more "serious," songs like "Red Headed Woman" and "57 Channels" seem like longshots at best, whereas "When the Lights Go Out" and "The Real World" are more likely inclusions. "Soul Driver" has been mentioned by at least one source as the first single.

The album's length has also been under intense scrutiny. Reports of a "double album" continue, though what that means in the age of compact disc remains to be seen. Springsteen may release a two-disc set or simply a full-length single disc that could range up to 80 minutes. Then again, Spring-

steen could pull a fast one and opt to put out another 12 song, 45 minute disc. The dilemma, then, seems to be artistic rather than technological, in that he could opt to go to two discs if he chose to put out a double. With the end of his Sony/Columbia contract close at hand and Jon Landau's dissatisfaction with the label expressed earlier this year in *Billboard* magazine, Springsteen is in the driver's seat (so what's new?) in terms of putting out exactly what he wants.

Of course, the most persistent question is why it has taken Bruce Springsteen so long to deliver an album? Never known for timely and frequent releases like R.E.M. or Elvis Costello, Springsteen has always taken unusually long periods of time before he puts something out. This time around, however, the circumstances are entirely different as he embarks on a journey unaccompanied — and, as some like Jon Landau and Sting may suggest, unencumbered — by the E Street Band. Springsteen wants to put as much time as possible between what he did last and what he will do next. By starting without the involvement of the E Street Band, Springsteen has an unprecedented opportunity to recreate himself as a performer. Despite his intentions to do that on the last tour, some fans argue that it amounted to little more than a temporary change in the set list. The next one is certain to be something entirely new, a tour that is a beginning rather than an addendum.

The overwhelming artistic success of the Christic Institute shows suggests that Springsteen's decision to go it alone, in essence, may be his most viable option; a notorious rocker like Springsteen doing a tour by himself, however, especially if reports of an album of *River*-style rockers prove true, seems unlikely. A show that is comprised of an acoustic set and an



electric set would accommodate much of what Springsteen does.

Whatever shape the performance ultimately takes, it is in the best interest of neither his integrity as an artist nor his longevity as a performer to go out and deliver the *Born in the USA* hits, an issue that Springsteen discussed around the time of *Tunnel of Love*.

The likelihood of a tour in support of the album remains high. As far as who may be included, the only person who seems to be a virtual shoo-in is Roy Bittan. The likely venue, of course, is the sports arena; suggestions that Bruce will play 3000-seat theaters seem remote. Springsteen's popularity has declined, as those who jumped on the bandwagon in the '80s are gone. While cities on the East Coast will have the usual onslaught of those who want tickets, folks in smaller markets will be able to get tickets with relative ease, simply because Springsteen's popularity has remained higher in his traditional markets like New Jersey and Philadelphia than in other places. As usual, tickets in these places will be hard to come by, even if it is an acoustic tour.

As Springsteen's popularity has declined, there is the question of how the album will be promoted. Due to the unprecedented length of time since his

last release and his near-invisibility since 1988, Springsteen may find himself wanting to promote the album in ways that would have been superfluous in times past. Whether Springsteen will consent to things like more media interviews or even appearances on MTV's *Unplugged* or *Saturday Night Live* depends, in large part, on how initial sales are.

Several sources indicate that the album will come out in the first quarter of 1992, most likely in March, and that Springsteen will hit the road sometime in the spring. Several things seem to confirm the accuracy of this time scale, including the re-release of the *Chimes of Freedom* EP as a CD5 (see *On Disc*) and the recent boost in the retail price of the *Live* set. While some might cynically suggest that Columbia merely wants to cash in on holiday shopping, a new release often follows this sort of move (witness the new U2 album, *Achtung Baby*, and the price of their back catalog). Perhaps the most telling tale, however, is a story that appeared in a Swedish newspaper in November, in which a Swedish Sony Music executive said that he would fly to the US with other higher-ups early in 1992 for a formal listening party.

Sources also indicated that as of late November, Springsteen was still putting finishing touches on the long-awaited album. The work supposedly involved simple post-production and final mixing.

With much of the puzzle unsolved, this is perhaps the most eagerly anticipated era of Bruce Springsteen's career. Taken together, this could be just the impetus he needs to make this the period for which he will ultimately be remembered. Four years is a long time, even by Springsteen's standards; the results should prove well worth the wait. ☺

—Jonathan B. Pont

Southside Johnny Hits the Road

With an unusual combination of a tremendous album and unwavering support from both his label and fans, Southside Johnny hit the road in December with the Asbury Jukes. The first leg of the tour included 19 dates, mostly in the Northeast and a handful in the Midwest. Although details at press time were not final, more dates in support of *Better Days* in 1992 are near certain.

This time out, the Asbury Jukes have an eight-piece band which includes the formidable horn section of Richie "La Bamba" Rosenberg, Joey Stann, and Mark Pender; Bobby Bandiera on guitar, Rusty Cloud on keyboards, bassist David Hayes, and drummer Dave Beal.

Those who have followed Southside over the years report that the shows have been among the most memorable and certainly the best that he and the Asbury Jukes have done in some time. The shows have been long, with two sets lasting 90 minutes and

two hours, respectively. Southside and company didn't leave the stage at the Bayou Club in Washington, D.C., until after 3 in the morning.

The material from *Better Days* comprises most of the set, while some of the older numbers have made infrequent appearances. "The Fever," for example, one of Southside Johnny's most popular numbers, has not been included in the majority of the shows. Other songs, meanwhile, have included new arrangements of older standards, such as "Hearts of Stone," performed acoustically with Bobby Bandiera on guitar. In addition to the acoustic version of Bruce Springsteen's "Fade Away" and a Shore version of "Purple Haze," covers have included "Blue Christmas" and "I'll Be Home For Christmas," the latter on which La Bamba sings lead.

In addition to the club performances with the Asbury Jukes, Southside has performed acoustic sets with Bobby Bandiera on at least two occasions. One in

Kansas City on December 17 was a holiday benefit for local anti-hunger projects. The two also appeared at a similar benefit November 23 at the Count Basie Theatre in Red Bank, New Jersey, with Gary US Bonds and Joe Walsh and Rick Derringer.

As *Better Days* continues to gather steam, Southside is enjoying a good deal of well-deserved publicity. He has appeared on *Late Night with David Letterman*, the *Tonight Show*, and has been featured in *Musician* and *Billboard*. On December 18, Southside and the band were in New York to tape a special for HBO, to be aired sometime in 1992. WHCN in Hartford, CT., broadcast the show performed December 19th.

As far as 1992 is concerned, Southside himself said that he is ready to "blast through every bar in the world." Shows on the West Coast, more in the Midwest, and perhaps a swing through the South seem probable as better days continue for Southside Johnny and the Asbury Jukes. 📌

Appel Book Delayed Until Summer

Although it is not yet in stores, the much talked about Bruce Springsteen biography *Down Thunder Road*, by Marc Eliot with Mike Appel, continues to create headlines. Already excerpted in *The Star* and featured in the *New York Daily News*, the latest headline is one about the book itself: its release has been delayed by several months because of a change in publishers and is now due out in sometime in the summer of 1992.

The original publisher was a West Coast-based start-up publishing concern that had put considerable effort into making *Down Thunder Road* a big news story, even before the book was issued. Written by Marc Eliot, author of *Rockonomics*, with Mike Appel, Springsteen's ex-manager, the

book was originally scheduled for release in November of 1991, but a change in publishers has now delayed the release date until July or August of 1992.

Few books on rock stars have generated as much press so far in advance of coming out. The book has already been touted in a full page ad in *Publisher's Weekly*, the industry trade magazine, as "the Bruce Springsteen story as it has never been told until now." Subtitled "The Making of Bruce Springsteen," the book contains numerous documents and contracts between Springsteen and Appel, and includes some of the actual depositions from the Springsteen/Appel lawsuits.

Media giant Simon and Schuster will now publish the book and conceivably put a big

promotional campaign behind it.

"The publisher change is in no way related to the content of the book," author Marc Eliot told *Backstreets* in December. "With a new publisher, I'm revising some of the book and now we're looking for a summer publication." The later publication date also places the book closer to Springsteen's upcoming tour, generating more publicity.

Although the book itself is not due until summer, a spoken word version of *Down Thunder Road* (a "Books-on-Tape" type release) was originally scheduled for release in December by a West Coast audio publisher. The cassette version is read by Marc Eliot, who includes in the reading many of the depositions of Appel, Springsteen, and manager Jon Landau. 📌

the backstreets jukebox

1. **Bruce Springsteen**
Darkness on the Edge of Town
Columbia (LP, First Japanese Pressing)

2. **R.E.M.**
Document
I.R.S. (CD)

3. **Matthew Sweet**
Girlfriend
Zoo (CD)

4. **Robyn Hitchcock & The Egyptians**
Perspex Island
A&M (CD)

5. **American Music Club**
Everclear
Alias (CD)

6. **Bob Dylan**
Infidels
Columbia (CD)

7. **The Clash**
Clash On Broadway
Epic (3 CD Boxed Set)

8. **Bruce Cockburn**
Nothing But a Burning Light
Columbia (CD)

9. **Neil Young**
Arc/Weld
Reprise (CD)

10. **Southside Johnny & the Asbury Jukes**
Better Days
Impact (CD)

10

Monster
Discs to Play Today
and Everyday

Southside

JOHNNY COMES HOME

to the Asbury Jukes & Better Days

The Backstreets interview by Robert Santelli

Musically speaking, this is the album that should have followed *Hearts of Stone*," says Southside Johnny about *Better Days*, his brand new album and the first one he's done with noted producer and songwriter Little Steven Van Zandt in over a decade. "It's a return to the sounds and the idea that made us who we were then and who we are today."

Better Days isn't only the album that should have come after *Hearts of Stone*, it's also the Southside Johnny's best album since that classic was cut in 1978. With a set of songs and a soul-soaked sensibility that recall the rhythm and blues flavored bar band sound that Van Zandt and Southside created, and their band, the Asbury Jukes, made famous in the mid and late '70s, *Better Days* marks a triumphant return to those good ol' days — without wallowing in nostalgia.

"We didn't want to get all drippy and long for those days when we were all based on the Jersey Shore and hung out there at the Stone Pony and all that," continues Southside. "That would have been foolish. Instead, we just wanted to capture some of the musical excitement that we all felt back then and kind of modernize it and bring it up-to-date."

In two separate interviews with Southside — one from his home in Southern California in August, the other in September in his trailer parked outside the Stone Pony in Asbury Park before the shooting began for his video, "It's Been a Long Time" — Southside discussed the events that led up to his reunion with Little Steven, the decision to make *Better Days*, and the music contained on it:

BACKSTREETS: *I think it's safe to say that, for most of your fans, Better Days is the record they've been waiting more than ten years for you to make. Can you explain how the project came to be?*

SOUTHSIDE: I'd talk to Steve (Van Zandt) about two or three times a year but he came to the Garden State Arts Center show I did with the the Jukes in New Jersey last year. It was an important get-together for us because Jon (Bon Jovi) was there and all three of us talked about different things. Then, some time after that, Steve was in L.A. and I went to see him there. We just sat in his hotel room and listened to tapes. The incredible thing was we almost had the identical songs: Bobby Bland, some Stax/Volt things, that we had put on tape for each other to listen to.





LARRY BUSACCA/RETNA LTD. PHOTO

The E Street Jukes at the Pony

It was amazing how in tune we were musically, because we hadn't been that way in a long, long time, maybe since the *Hearts of Stone* days. I mean, me, Steve, Bruce — we had all gone off in different directions with our own careers. Anyway, at the time, I had a blues band here in California that I'd been playing with so I didn't become stagnant and my voice didn't become clear — I would hate that — and Steve came to hear it. Afterwards, he suggested that we should make a blues album. But the more we got into it, the more it seemed to Steve that we should make a Jukes album. I really wanted to make a Jukes album, too. It just felt right. The album grew from that. I had a bunch of songs that Bobby Bandiera and I had written together, and songs from other people, and some covers. And Steven, once we got really going, started to write, and he came up with some great things. It got very exciting. *Better Days* is, essentially, a re-discovery of the old Asbury Park sound. Was that your original intention?

The songs on it look back at that period in the '70s, sure,

but they also look back on an earlier period, the Upstage period.

In what regard?

Well, there are a lot of references in the lyrics and the music itself to those days; there's one song that is overtly

The E Street Jukes
**"Sometimes it's interesting to go
 back to the original things you did
 and see how it feels doing them after
 so much time has passed by and so
 many lessons have been learned."**
 — Southside

about those times called "It's Been a Long Time" that Steven wrote. It looks directly at those days. We all have a lot of roots and explored a lot of things over the years. Sometimes it's interesting to go back to the original things you did and see how it feels doing them after so much time has passed by and so many lessons have been learned. We wanted this album to sound like the Jukes

— the way the group sounded when we made the first three albums. It's a very traditional album in that way.

*Working with Steve Van Zandt again must have been very interesting for you. Van Zandt, as you're well aware, is a take charge kind of guy. Was *Better Days* a shared vision? In other words, was your role more than just the singer?*

Sure. Steve and I wouldn't have done the album if we didn't want the same things. I mean, he'd say, "Let's do

this," and I'd say, "Great." And then I'd say, "I wanna do this," and he'd say, "Fine." We had things that we argued about, but the good thing about our relationship is that he'll listen to me and I'll listen to him. Mostly, I listen to him (laughs). In other words, to use your words, yes, it was a shared vision. The album came out the way we both hoped it would turn out. Let's face it, Steve's a great songwriter; the stuff on the new album is as good as the stuff on *Hearts of Stone* and the first Jukes album, *I Don't Want to Go Home*. It's some of the best stuff Steve has ever written, as well as some of the best arranging he's ever done. *The recording sessions must have seemed like an Asbury Park reunion. In addition to getting horn players Richie "La Bamba" Rosenberg and Ed Manion, among others, to do the album, you also have the E Street Band rhythm section — drummer Max Weinberg and bass player Garry Tallent on it — plus, of course, Bruce and Jon Bon Jovi.*

And they all played great. Max, for instance, played unbelievably well on the album. I think it's probably one of the best records he's ever made. And of course Garry was the Rock of Gibraltar. So the nucleus was just what it should have been. And the rest of us just took it from there. *Is there any reason why the album was called Better Days than the fact that one of the songs on the album is so titled?*

Well, it's a little wordplay because we're looking back. We were thinking about those "better days" in the sense that we were young and thought we were really hot (laughs). But on the album we also looked into the future. Actually, the album is about looking into your past and saying, "Boy, that was great," and yet knowing that there's still good things to come. I hate explaining all this (laughs). If you look back and it feels good, and you look into the future, you want those days to be good, too. There's hope if you work at it. If you don't, then you've got to accept what's going on and that's it. *The album was actually recorded in early summer, right?*

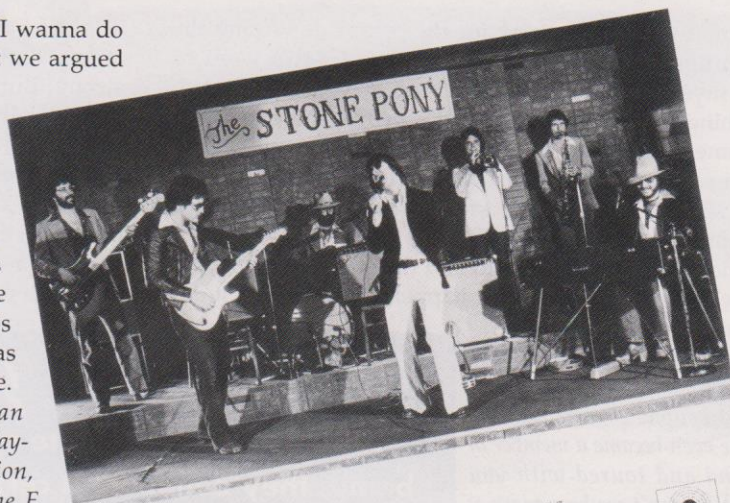
That's right. It went from May to the first part of July, about 6 weeks altogether. And it was recorded in New York at Sigma Sound.

And it was a lot of fun. Everyone told old stories about my temper and my surrealistic behavior onstage. It was great. Seriously, it was fun because everyone was looking forward to working with Steve again, even me. And there were some wild things that went on. *Such as?*

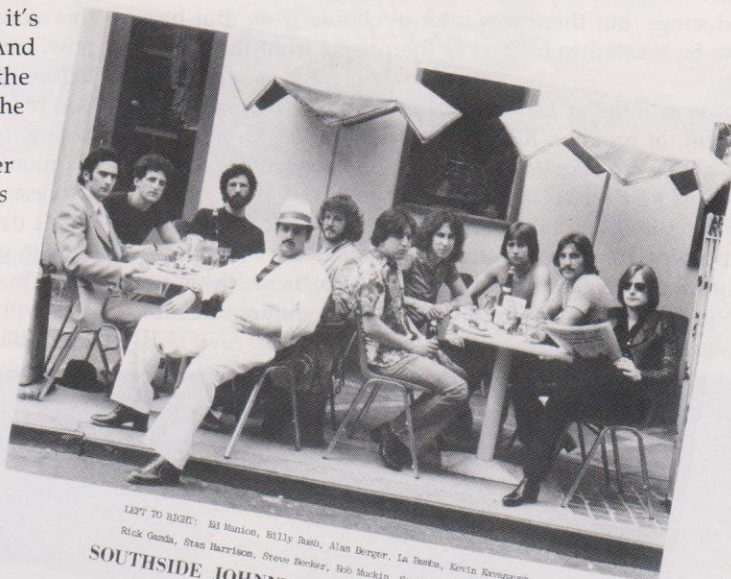
Well, like Bruce didn't bring his song in ("All the Way Home") until we were finished recording and were into mixing. He didn't come in with a lyric sheet or anything like that. He knew the song and sat down at the piano and played it, while I wrote down the lyrics. Actually, he was deciding on words right up to the last minute. *How did Bruce get involved in the project?*

Steven talked to him about it and Bruce said that

Epic's promotional photos for the first three Southside Johnny and the Asbury Jukes albums.



SOUTHSIDE JOHNNY AND THE ASBURY JUKES
Photo Credit: Richard E. Aaron



LEFT TO RIGHT: Ed Manion, Billy Bush, Alan Berger, La Bamba, Kevin Kavanaugh, Rick Gada, Stan Harrison, Steve Becker, Bob Mackin, Southside Johnny
SOUTHSIDE JOHNNY and the ASBURY JUKES



Southside Johnny & the Asbury Jukes

Photograph: David Gahr

he wanted to do something for the record. It's funny the way things come together sometimes. I don't want to sound mystical or anything, but once Steve and I started, everything fell into place. The right people came in at the right time. Everything we did seemed to make sense, even though we didn't try to push things. The things that happened seemed right, if you know what I mean. The first Jukes album was like that, too. I would sing a vocal with the band while the entire band and the horns were playing and we'd keep it. That doesn't happen too often. But it did this time around.

Jon Bon Jovi has been very supportive of you and the Jukes over the past couple of years. At one point he even became a member of the band and toured with you guys. Why don't we hear more of his input on Better Days?

Jon and I wrote some songs together, but none of them got on the album. They're really good songs, but there was a lot to choose from. But he's great; he wanted to be part of the project from the beginning.

It seems as if Better Days is part of a growing renaissance, if you will, of soul and R&B that might have begun with the release of the big Stax/Volt catalog some months ago. Do you see a soul and R&B revival in the making?

I don't know. I think certain kinds of music last longer than others. What we think of as fashionable are the things that make it to the top. But underneath these, there's a whole lot of things boiling. Punk is still a vibrant force for Southside in Seattle, 1984

a lot of bands. Chicago and Delta blues are still very strong. Right now it seems as if R&B is starting to come on strong. But the important thing to remember is that it's never really been away. I mean, I don't think there's a drummer around today, even heavy metal drummers, who haven't heard the Motown stuff. At some point, what they've heard goes into their brain. They may never play a Motown riff, but it's there in their mind. What I'm trying to say is that I don't look for trends or styles. There's just too much out there. I love diversity.

The E Street Jukes

"Albums don't delineate a human being, they delineate a certain time in your life." — Southside

Anyone who examines your post-Hearts of Stone recording catalog will find it to be very diverse. In fact, it almost seems that with Better Days you've come full-circle, musically speaking. Do you see it that way?

I think the record represents a certain type of closure, but I'm not looking at

this album as, "Okay, this is what I wanted to do here and now, the next thing I do will be whatever." I've said this before, but when you start out to do an album, it's as if you're bringing together how you feel and what you're listening to in that one little space of time, and that's it. Now, six months after your album comes out, you might be into Chinese polka music or something. I don't know. Albums don't delineate a human being, they delineate a certain time in your life. I have lots of things that I still want to do. I just made a bus tape — I'm going out on the road soon and will probably be out there a long time. The tape has a lot of blues on it, plus some Stax/Volt and some Hendrix

DAVID DUBOIS PHOTO





Southside and Bobby Bandiera at the Earth Day Benefit concert in Jersey City, 1990

and a lot of Robert Johnson's material, too.

You've put back the "Asbury" into the band's name. Does that mean some of its original or early members will tour with you?

It's going to have a plethora of people in it. I know La Bamba will be in the band, as will (guitarist) Bobby Bandiera and (keyboards player) Rusty Cloud. David Hayes, who played with Van Morrison for years, will be on bass. Dave Beal, who played with Joe Cocker, will be on drums. He lives in New York but he's got Cleveland roots, so he's gotta be good. Mick Seely will be on keyboards and vocals. He's from the Shore. Then there's the horn section, which in addition to La Bamba will consist of Joey Mann, Mark Pender, and Barry Danielian. Some of them have been Jukes for a long time; others, not so long.

Was there ever a consideration of Steven touring with the band?

I think right now Steven is in producer mode. He's currently working on Charlie Sexton's new record. He's going to be in the studio until he can't stand it anymore, and then we'll see.

You mentioned earlier that you were playing with a blues band.

Yeah, it was called Blues Deluxe. See, I moved out to California to get away, because back in New Jersey I wasn't writing and I was stagnating. It was just too much of the same for me. Coming out here was quite a shock at first, but it has made me write and work with different people. But I wasn't playing. The Jukes weren't playing

because there was no album out. I get very antsy when I'm not playing regularly. I end up jamming with people I don't even like. So I got together with David Hayes, who also lives out here, and we put together a blues band. We got Doug Hamblin, who's just a brilliant blues guitar player, and a couple of other guys, and did little bars in Southern California. We played lots of Chicago blues and some vocal group things, plus some Mose Allison stuff. I tried very hard to make it a band, rather than *my* band. And it worked; it was a lot of fun.

Do you miss New Jersey?

Yes. I find I miss the lushness of New Jersey. I know that for most people who don't live in New Jersey, "lushness" might refer to the drunks falling over themselves in

bars in Keyport or somewhere. But I do miss the beauty of New Jersey and the people, too. I really do.

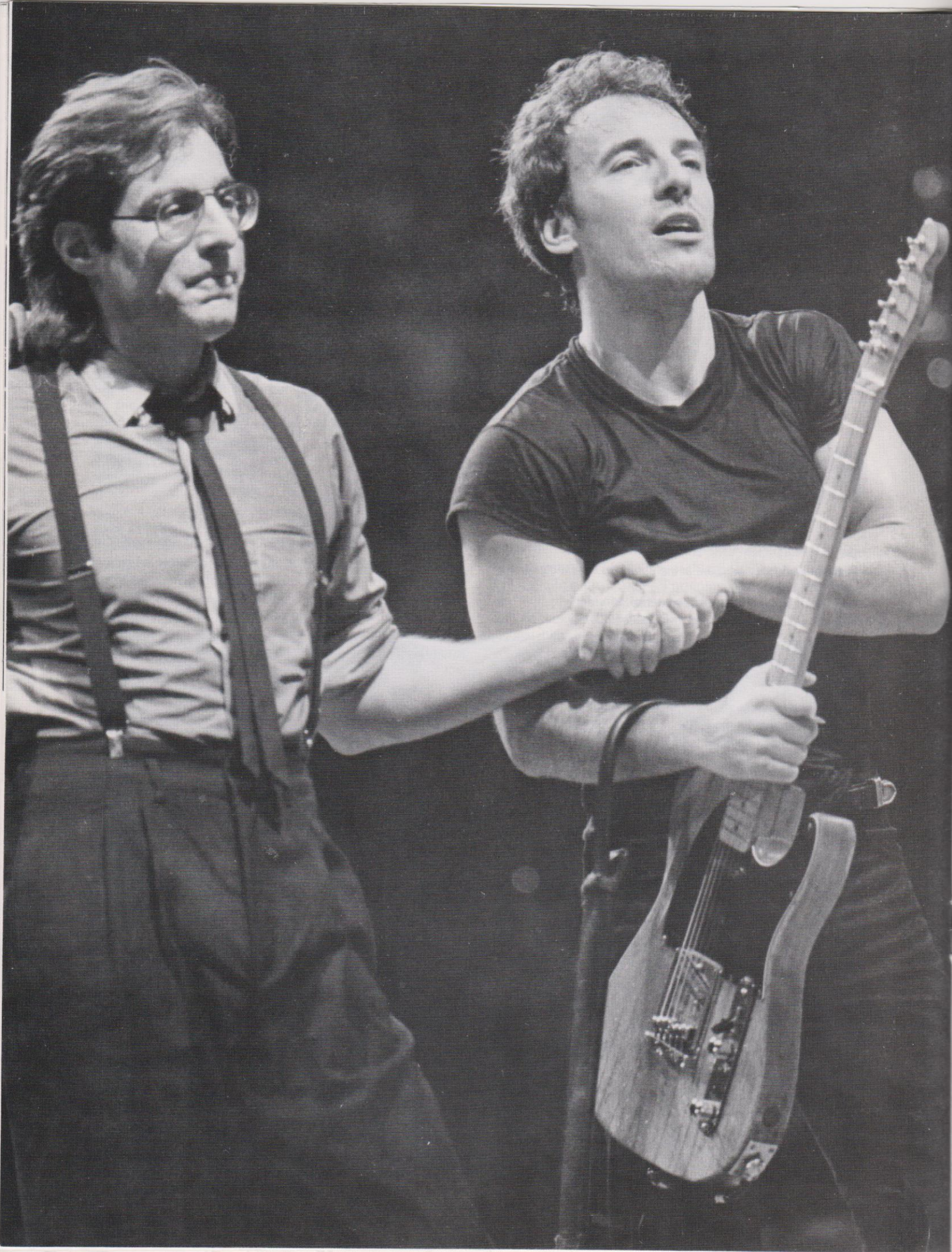
Do you plan to work with Van Zandt in the future?

Well, remember, at one point, we were going to make a blues band and do a blues album. We were talking about completely different personnel for a blues band than the people who eventually played on the album. But, as it turned out, what

was really in our hearts was to make a Jukes album. We both knew that. We just figured we'd make the blues album first and then do the Jukes album. So now that we've made the Jukes album first, maybe the next album will be the blues album, I don't know. We'll probably use the Jukes for that one, too. 🍷

The E Street Jukes

"I miss the lushness of New Jersey. I know that for most people who don't live in New Jersey, 'lushness' might refer to the drunks falling over themselves in Keyport . . . but I do miss the beauty of New Jersey and the people too." — Southside



AFTER THE FLOOD

Max Weinberg finds
happiness off E Street

The Backstreets interview by Robert Santelli

In the days before MTV and massive arena tours, being a drummer in a rock 'n' roll band meant keeping the beat and little else. Sure there were a handful of drummers — Ringo Starr, Keith Moon, John Bonham and perhaps Ginger Baker — who had achieved the stardom and artistic freedom enjoyed by their guitar playing counterparts. But for all the other drummers, rock 'n' roll and what it stood for was experienced from the back of the stage, not the front of it.

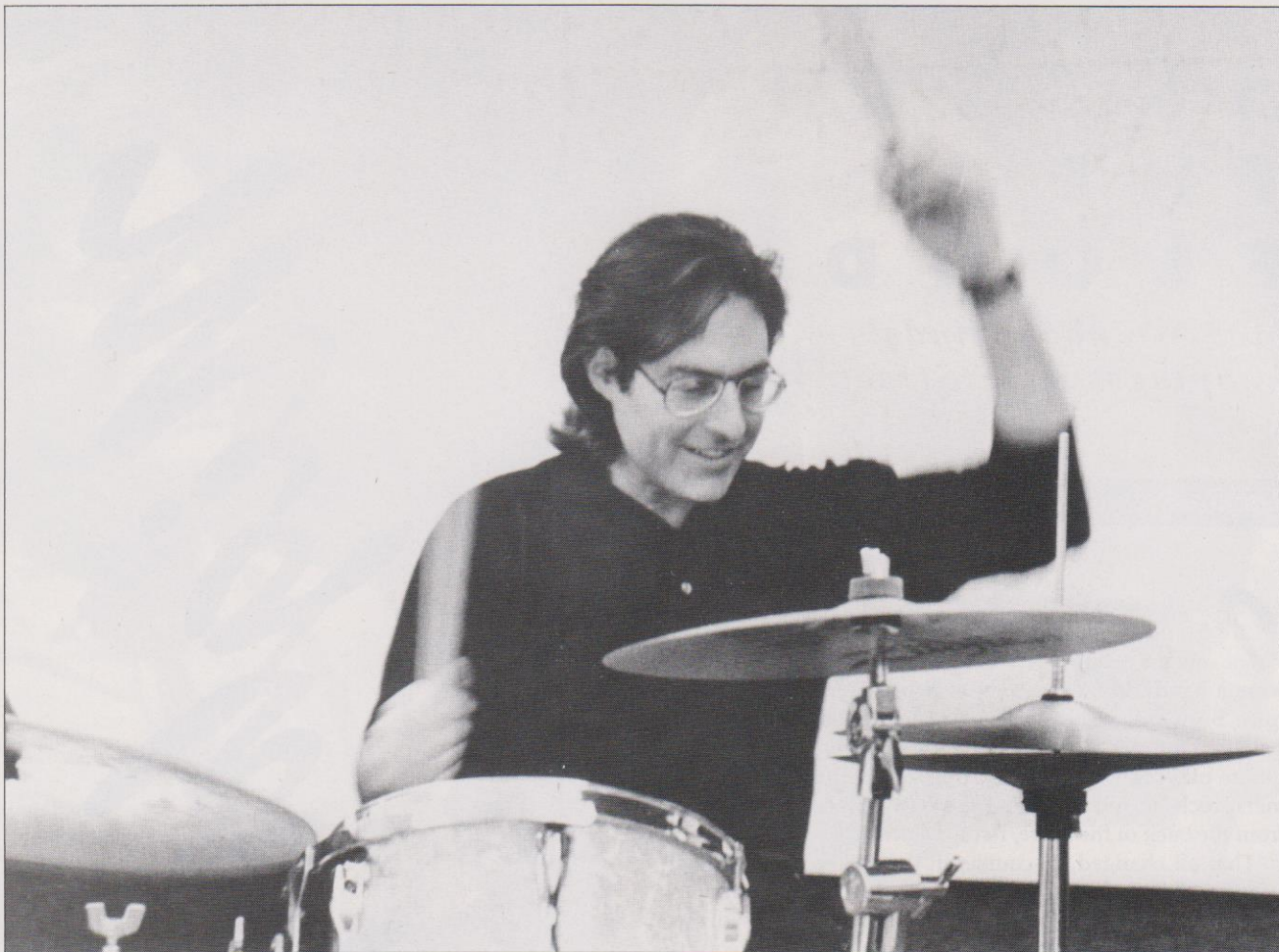
That all changed, of course, in the 1980s. The startling success of Phil Collins and Don Henley, two drummers whose rock 'n' roll vision extended far beyond their drum kits, enabled other drummers to step out of the stereotypical image they had been saddled with and to explore new paths in pop music.

Take, for instance, E Street Band drummer Max Weinberg. In addition to playing behind Bruce Springsteen, Weinberg sought — and succeeded — to enlarge his own vision of rock 'n' roll. In 1984, he wrote *The Big Beat (Conversations with Rock's Greatest Drummers)*, a book that personalized the history of rock drumming. He did it through revealing interviews with everyone from D.J. Fontana (Elvis's drummer), to Ringo Starr, to Charlie Watts. Later, he embarked on a series of critically acclaimed college lecture tours in which he spoke about attaining goals and avoiding the pitfalls of success, along with his experiences as a member of the E Street Band.

Weinberg's latest project is that of record producer and record company president. He is head of Hard Ticket Entertainment, a subsidiary of the New Jersey jazz and classical label, Music Masters. This summer, Weinberg began his new career with *Scene of the Crime*, an album he made for Hard Ticket with the New York/New Jersey group Killer Joe. In addition to producing *Scene of the Crime*, he, of course, also played drums on it and got a number of major artists — Jon Bon Jovi, Little Steven, the Beach Boys, Branford Marsalis, Southside Johnny — to make guest appearances.

During a two day interview session with *Backstreets*, Weinberg talked about his new album, his new role running a record company and producing records, as well as the years with Springsteen and the E Street Band. This is what he said:

Mighty Max



Max circa 1991 behind the kit with Killer Joe.

BACKSTREETS: *A lot of people are calling Scene of the Crime a record that's built around the Asbury Park sound. There are R&B songs on it. You used a horn section. Is it an Asbury Park record?*

MAX WEINBERG: Not really. Any link to Asbury Park or to the Jersey Shore is primarily geographical, because I still live here on the Shore and also I played with Bruce and the E Street Band for so long. I suppose you might say I helped create the Asbury Park sound with my drumming. I play the way I play, no matter what project it is. But to answer your question, the Killer Joe sound is far more diverse than the Asbury Park sound. What Joe Delia (Killer Joe keyboards player) and I tried to do with the band was to take 12 songs, most of which represent the kind of music that influenced us to become musicians in the first place, and bring it back to life again. We dealt with boogie, blues, and pop, the stuff that made a mark on us when we were learning what music was really all about.

I understand you recorded Scene of the Crime live in the studio with a minimum of overdubs.

Most of the album was cut live; that's why the album has such a great feel. We didn't agonize over every decision, and you get something when you do that. You get a certain atmosphere that's very real.

Is Killer Joe a one-shot project for you? Or will there be other Killer Joe projects you might get involved in?

Killer Joe isn't really a band. Killer Joe is Joe Delia and me and whatever musical flights of fancy we take together. It's not a full-time band. We won't be doing any tours. The original concept of Killer Joe was begun by Joe in 1989 as a

way to explore the various genres he grew up with. He asked me to sit in with him one time, and I really enjoyed it. It made me stretch as a drummer: we played swing, plus light period pieces from the '30s. Then, when it came time for me to decide what project I wanted to do for Hard Ticket, I had this Killer Joe rehearsal tape I played for my partners. They loved it and said, "Why don't we make it the first project?" So we started out as a jazz record with rock overtones and ended up much more rock-oriented. The album was made with the idea that if you played it at a party, you could put it on from start to finish, just let it play. There were no great statements made with *Scene of the Crime*, which, in a way, is a great statement in itself.

How far back does your relationship with Joe Delia extend?

We met in 1971 when we were both hired to play in a Las Vegas-type show that did gigs in Seaside Heights (a Jersey Shore resort town south of Asbury Park). We hit it off and after about three weeks of this show band thing,

The E Street Jukes

"For years, I'd been looking to move into the business sector of music. I've always wanted to go from making records to understanding the mechanics of selling records."

— Max Weinberg

we decided to quit and start our own band. That band, which was a rock band, stayed together in one shape or another, for about three years. It had a variety of names: The Great White Wail and Snatch were two of them. The last name we had was High Point. That band lasted until August of 1974, which was when I met Bruce. Joe did some



pretty interesting things after our band broke up. He started the whole Buster Poindexter thing, which, like Killer Joe, was about taking these old music forms — boogie, blues, rhythm and blues — and re-inventing them. Delia's idea started out as a very hip downtown New York thing and it turned into a caricature, once David Johansen took it over. And that's when Delia left, which paved the way for Killer Joe. We had always stayed in touch; on occasion, when Bruce wasn't touring, I'd sit in with him. He's a great musician; he plays with tremendous soul.

Though you were involved in the production of John Eddie's debut album, Scene of the Crime is really the first time we see you in the producer's chair.

Yeah, it was my vision that we used to make the record. It was a challenge for me, but I really loved working at it. I also found that I was pretty good at it, because I'm a drummer, and what a drummer does is "produce" the drum part when a band plays. All successful drummers — guys like Hal Blaine and Al Jackson — are producers even though sometimes they don't get credit for it. One of the most important things a drummer has to do is keep his focus on the big picture, the music. If you don't, you end up playing your favorite drum licks rather than what's right for the song. What I tried to do is take what I've learned from people like Bruce, Steve Van Zandt, Jon Landau, Tom Dowd, Jimmy Iovine, and Chuck Plotkin and apply it to the Killer Joe album. *Scene of the Crime* has a number of guest artists on it — from Jon Bon Jovi and Southside Johnny to Branford Marsalis and the Beach Boys.

Top: Garry, Roy, Max and Danny backstage on the Born to Run tour. Bottom: Max watches Professor Bittan mend Steven's hat before the Oklahoma City show in '75.

Yeah, that's right. I wanted them, however, to be more than just names on the back of the album. I really wanted them to contribute to the music. For instance, on the song "There's Nobody Home," we had space for a sax solo, so I asked Branford to do it. He also played on "Summer on Signal Hill." I wanted a great guitar solo on that song, too;

Steve (Van Zandt) did an unbelievable solo. What was really great was that everyone was so professional. They all came in and instantly locked into what I wanted to accomplish with the record.

The one "guest" not on the record that I think most people expected to be on it is Bruce. Why isn't he on Scene on the Crime?

Bruce was busy.

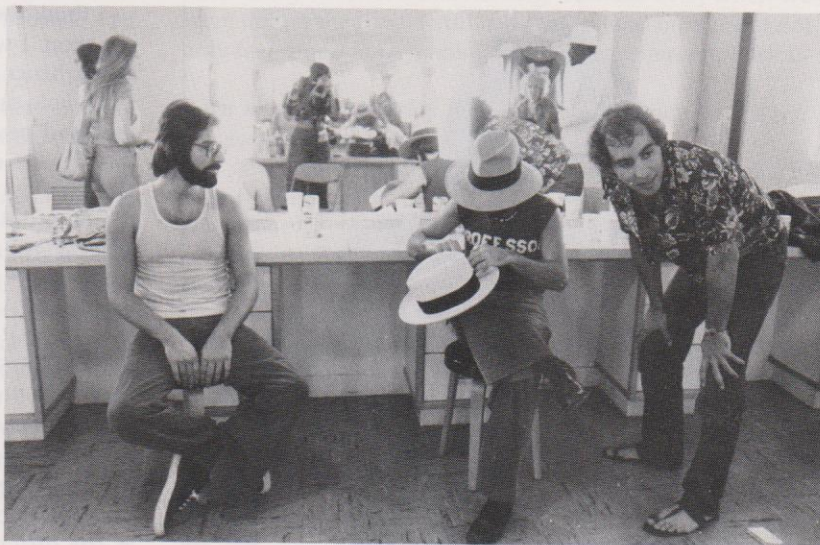
Yet you cut two of his songs, "Summer on Signal Hill" and "Club Soul City." Why did you choose those two songs?

Well, I've always liked them and always thought, that on record, they were never given just treatment. Also, they're great Springsteen songs that not a lot of people have heard.

You produced Scene of the Crime, played drums on it, and got the project together in the first place. But you're also president of Hard Ticket, the New Jersey record company that

released it. You've gone a long way to dispel the image of the drummer as one who merely keeps the beat in the back of the band.

Well, you know, these are all things I've always wanted to do. For years, I'd been looking to move into the business sector of music. I've always wanted to go from making records to understanding the mechanics of selling records. And that's what I'm doing.



Is Killer Joe a good representation of the kinds of bands Hard Ticket is interested in signing?

Yes and no. I'm wide open as to what kinds of bands and what kinds of music Hard Ticket will ultimately be about. I'm listening to hundreds of tapes; I'm keeping my ears open. Basically, I envision Hard Ticket to be like what Capitol and Atlantic were in the old days: a full-service label that put out good music, no matter what it was.

The E Street Jukes

"Initially, it (the breakup) was very difficult to accept. In fact, I didn't accept it at first; I denied it . . . it was never truly articulated to me that the relationship the E Street Band had with Bruce was definitely over."

— Max Weinberg

It's been two years since Bruce told members of the E Street Band, including yourself, that ". . . I'm going to be recording an album with a variety of people." You seem to have taken this as an opportunity to work for yourself and achieve goals you might not otherwise have achieved if you were still working "under the company banner."

Two years is not a long time to have a perspective of what happened and why and whether or not what happened was a good thing. The jury is still out on that one. What kinds of feelings ran through your head when you got that phone call from Bruce in 1989?

Initially, it was very difficult to accept. In fact, I didn't accept it at first; I denied it. I think that was because it was never truly articulated to me that the relationship the E Street Band had with Bruce was definitely over. I had to figure that out for myself.

Are you saying that you were hurt by Bruce's decision to terminate the band?

Well, I spent a large part of my life as a member of the E

Street Band. People would say, "Forget about it, that's business. It was a job." I never saw it as "just" a job. You know, one of the things that made what happened a bit more difficult was that six weeks before I got the phone call from Bruce, I had read in *Backstreets* how he was in L.A. recording with studio musicians (the "Viva Las Vegas" sessions). I didn't believe it, I thought it was a rumor. Finally, when I was told that other arrangements were being made for Bruce's next album, I put two and two together and realized that what I read in *Backstreets* was indeed true. Now that hurt.

Before you got involved in the Killer Joe project, you thought about a career in law. You even enrolled in law school.

Yeah, that's right. It was an attempt on my part to gain some footing in my life. You have to understand that from August 23, 1974 to October 18, 1989, the main focus of my professional life was to how to best serve Bruce Springsteen. When that was over, I had to make real adjustments. Going to law school was an attempt to make some connection to the Max Weinberg that existed before he met Bruce Springsteen. Back then, my intention was to graduate from college in 1974 and go on to law school. I wanted to become an entertainment lawyer.

You said you were hurt by what happened. Were you also angry?

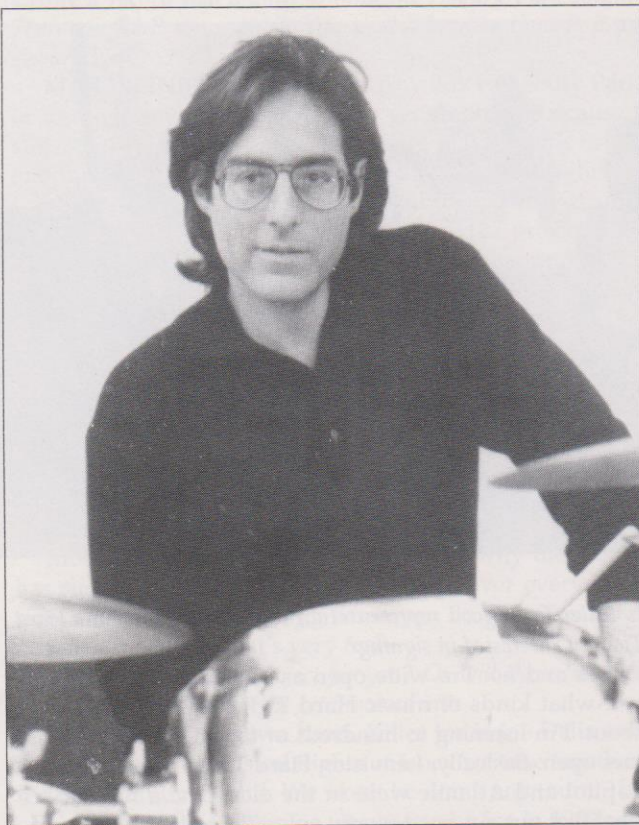
I was angry at being left a legacy that I was fired, because I had never been fired from anything in my life. That hurt personally, and it hurt in the marketplace because, in a way, some people in the music business looked at me as if I were damaged goods.

To my knowledge, neither Bruce nor anyone else associated with him ever came out publicly to explain the reasons why he dissolved the E Street Band. Not that Bruce had to do this, mind you. But a lot of people believe that had Bruce given some explanation, it might have made it easier for the band members to deal with the situation.

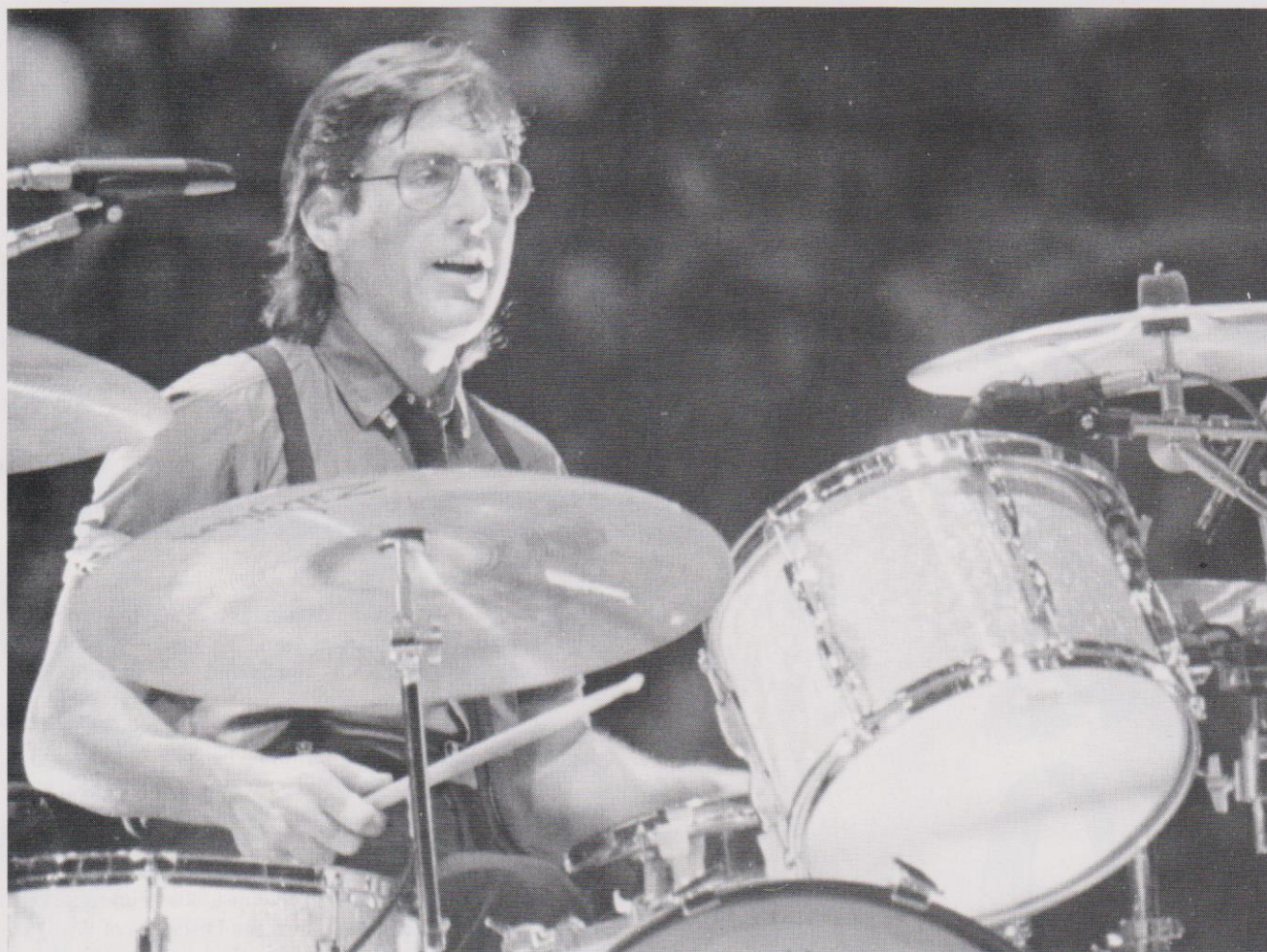
I think there were more sensitive ways of handling the situation. I was angry about that. I certainly wasn't angry about Bruce wanting to explore new musical territories. His whole career has been built on the idea of doing things that had never been done, of testing the unknown. You know, a lot of those initial feelings I had were eventually replaced by a sense of liberation. I'm beginning to create my own destiny. For 16 years, my identity was, "There's Max Weinberg, Bruce Springsteen's drummer." These days, it's more like, "There's Max Weinberg, Becky's husband and Ali and Jay's father." In the large scheme of things, that's infinitely more important than what I did with the E Street Band. But don't get me wrong, I loved playing with Bruce and the band, and it was fun playing with Bruce a few weeks ago in Asbury Park during Southside Johnny's video shoot. But my highest priority today is my family. No one ever went to their death bed saying to themselves or anyone else, "Boy, I wish I spent more time at the office," whether that office is a concert stage, a recording studio, or corporate suite. That's sort of the perspective I have on life now.

If an opportunity came along to, say, join a major band and go back out on the road and do what you did with the E Street Band, would you?

It would depend. I'm not looking to recreate the E Street Band experience because I know I never could. I think musicians who were in big bands who have tried to recapture what they once had almost always wind up looking



Max in the studio with Killer Joe recording *Scene of the Crime*.



At the Spectrum, Philadelphia, March 9, 1988

foolish and wasting a lot of time. I think I'd rather get on with the rest of my life. I also think, that in my case, an offer to join a big band is unlikely to happen because you need to put yourself in the flow of things. To be truthful, there were a couple of gigs — big arena gigs with big bands — that I tried to get and I didn't. I live here in New Jersey. I don't live in California. That puts me outside the inner circle.

As a musician looking back on the first part of your career, did you accomplish what you set out to accomplish?

Oh God, I accomplished what I wanted to accomplish as a musician the first week I joined the E Street Band back in 1974. Everything else after that was gravy. I think that's one of the reasons why I'm able to look at what happened in 1989 and move on. There might be a sense of wistfulness that I experience on occasion. Who wouldn't, given the great things the E Street Band did with Bruce? But the fact that I accomplished so much as the band's drummer goes a long way in filling up some of that bittersweet feeling.

Do you miss playing the drums?

Yeah, I do. I miss playing drums in the E Street Band, but even more so, I miss the creative intensity of what playing the drums in that band was all about. You know, it's weird, but a strange thing is happening to me. I'm beginning to forget what it feels like to play a stadium. I'm talking about the physicality of it. In my life, I've experienced death. And no matter how hard you try to hold on to the physical aspects of a person, like the voice and their smell, those things fade away. It's a bit like that for me now. It's been three years since I played a big concert with

Bruce, which is the longest it's ever been for me. And I'm starting to lose the physical sensation of how exciting that thrill really is. That's disorienting, because even when we were not on the road, I still had that to hold on to. So, I not only feel different psychologically, I feel different physically.

What kind of relationship do you have with Bruce these days? Do you speak with him much?

I've talked with him more in the last year than I have in the previous four years.

How about the other E Street Band members?

I talk to Garry (Tallent) frequently. I did a few tours with Nils (Lofgren). But we've all pretty much gone our own separate ways. I kind of liken it to when the patriarch of a family dies or leaves, the family tends to split and drift apart. That's pretty much what's happened to the E Street Band.

Is there any prospect that Bruce might one day put together the E Street Band again?

I suppose there is that chance; nothing is impossible. One of the things that I've always said about Bruce is that you never know what he's going to do next. In fact, that's the only predictable thing about him. However, every indication that I've gotten in the past couple of years is that no one should count on it. So I'm not.

But should he ever ask, you would do it?

Oh, are you kidding? I'd do it in a second, and I'd do it for free.

Isn't that what you told Bruce the first time you met him in '74?

Yeah, as a matter of fact, it is. I guess some things don't ever change. 🐾

Little Steven

OUT OF THE DARKNESS

Steven goes back to the roots

The Backstreets interview by Robert Santelli

Little Steven Van Zandt has been called the architect of the Asbury Park Sound, the genius behind the blaring horns and the rhythm and blues based rock that, in the mid and late '70s, made Southside Johnny and the Asbury Jukes the great American bar band. Later, as a member of the E Street Band, he became Springsteen's right hand man, an invaluable musician, arranger, and friend whose rock 'n' roll vision extended far beyond the stage and studio.

We saw just how far that vision reached when Van Zandt left the E Street Band in the mid-'80s and embarked on a solo career. Using his band, the Disciples of Soul, as his musical springboard, Van Zandt integrated into his music a political fervor and an unabashed concern for human rights and justice that was conspicuously absent in artists with triple his fame and clout.

Such passion probably cost him a good part of his career. The record industry thought him too risky to work with; his soul seemed bigger than his ambition to be a rock star. And when speaking in terms of money and sales, that, most A&R execs agreed, added up to a bad roll of the dice.

So it seemed that Van Zandt's career was a wash-out. Sure, he had spoken at the U.N., worked with Nelson Mandela, and given to rock 'n' roll some of the most riveting message music of the 1980s. But by the end of the decade he was without a U.S. recording contract and without a band. Some even said Steven was without a future.

They were wrong, of course. One listen to Southside Johnny and the Asbury Jukes' new album, *Better Days*, should be proof enough. Not only did Van Zandt produce the album and write most of its songs, but in the process he re-created a sound that rock 'n' roll had all but forgotten.

Better Days is a big, bold record that's as good as any Van Zandt has made in his 20-year career. It tells the story of those early days in Asbury Park. It defines a rock 'n' roll attitude that could have been only born and nurtured in New Jersey. In the end, Van Zandt and Southside came to the same conclusion: sometimes, it's best to look back before you look forward.

In an exclusive interview at a small New York City cafe in October, Little Steven spoke to *Backstreets* about *Better Days* and the glory days, about politics and pursuing a dream, about making records and making peace with oneself. It was in an interview with *Backstreets* in 1983 that Van



Zandt first announced that he was leaving the E Street Band so it came as no surprise that Steve was honest, insightful, and revealing. Here's what he had to say:

BACKSTREETS: *With Better Days, it's almost as if you've come full-circle. You've gone back to the very sound that launched your career in the first place.*

LITTLE STEVEN: Well, you know, for me, the roots of the album go back to 1989 when I came back from touring Europe. I decided I was going to put together a new band in America. But I also knew that was going to take some time because I wanted to be just the guitar player in the band. That meant finding a singer, which I knew would be no easy task. In the meantime, I also wanted to produce a few records, and one I really wanted to do right away was a blues album.

A traditional blues album?

Yeah, a sort of Chicago-style blues album. I was going to do it with a friend of mine, Ron Taylor, who's this L.A. blues singer. He's fantastic. But I couldn't get any record company interested, which pissed me off because Taylor is like a young Howlin' Wolf. He's the real thing. Someday I will produce his record. (Pause) Anyway, just after this I ran into (Southside) Johnny. We got talkin' and I said, "Johnny, let's make this record we never made. Let's go back and do the things we used to do." I took the idea to a few record companies and got a response that was stronger than I expected. They liked the idea that Johnny and I were getting together. They especially liked the idea of a Jukes record with the two of us involved. So we got a deal in five minutes. And that was it.

When you started writing songs for the album, were you ever concerned that what you were doing might turn out to be little more than re-hashing the past without doing anything new to say about it?

No, because good music doesn't have any time or context constraints. My concern was that I wouldn't be able to equal or beat *Hearts of Stone*. That was my personal concern. Those three records I had done with the Jukes were important to me, particularly *Hearts of Stone*, the third one. *When you hear Better Days today, does it meet your expectations? In your mind, can the album stand side by side with Hearts of Stone?*

I think so, yeah. *Better Days* is a different album than *Hearts of Stone*.

In what way?

Well, it has a more contemporary sound to it, for one. But more important is that I'm a better producer today than I was back when we made that record. I'm better able to capture in the studio what a live band sounds like.

You not only produced the album, but you wrote a majority of its songs. Was it easy to come up with new material for a band you hadn't worked with in years?

Well, let me put it this way: the first song on the album, "Comin' Back," took me three or four months to write. It was very, very difficult. See, you don't appreciate what you do as a kid, you really don't. The stuff may sound very spontaneous, but those songs we did back then were really quite complicated. With *Better Days*, I had to figure out a way to get back into Southside's head because he would be the one singing the songs on the album.

There's a line in "Comin' Back" in which you say you're coming back for what's your's. What did you have in mind?

I wanted that line to mean a couple of different things. I



ANASTASIA PANTSIOS PHOTO

Steven and Southside, Memorial Day in Asbury Park, 1976

wanted it to be able to be interpreted on a romantic relationship level, if someone wanted that, or needed to hear that. But it always bothered me a little bit that Southside Johnny re-invented what a bar band was. Before Johnny came along, the term "bar band" was an insult. After Johnny, it was a compliment. After that first record came out, there were a number of people — Graham Parker, Willy DeVille, Fabulous Thunderbirds, Huey Lewis — that were considered as having this "bar band" thing, and it was taken as a compliment. And everyone, with the possible exception of Willy, was more successful than Johnny. That always bothered me. So, getting back to the song, what I was trying to do with those lyrics was, in a way, to come back and take what was mine. I know that I do this (the "bar band" sound) as good or better than anybody. So I'm comin' back and letting people know this.

It's been, what, a decade since you and Johnny worked together.

Yeah, it has been a pretty long time.

What did you think of the albums he and the Jukes made after you two parted company?

To tell you the truth, I didn't keep up with them. I don't remember hearing about them too much.

What caused the split between the two of you?

Well, at the time, I had been doing my thing with Springsteen and the Jukes and it was pretty much killing me, especially during the recording of *Hearts of Stone*. We (Springsteen and the E Street Band) were touring at the time the record was being made. So we'd finish a show and I'd hop on a plane and come back home to work on the album. I wasn't sleeping in those days. But after the record was done, I just felt that I couldn't take the Jukes much further. Up until that album I was having some fun. I was learning how to produce. I wasn't taking things all that seriously, and neither was Johnny. I mean, for the second album, we were having a ball. I was pretending I was Leiber and Stoller, and we had a great time. But by the time we were ready to do *Hearts of Stone*, I realized that what we created was a real thing, that it really worked. So I wanted to make a record that identified with the band, you know, give them an identity that they could live with.

That meant I had to stop fooling around with string sections and all different kinds of genres. I wanted to make a real focused record — which we did.

Now, at that time, Johnny and (Jukes guitarist) Billy Rush had started to write, and, well, it became a little awkward for me. I didn't want to be in a position where I had to say my songs are better than your songs. I don't like that. I don't write songs for that reason. If I'm writing songs for someone, they got to want me to do the songs. I also felt, creatively, I had kind of done what I set out to do, so I split.

The very first time I heard about any contributions you made in the studio — and this was before the Jukes' first album — was, of course, with Springsteen and the making of Born to Run. I'm talking about the story that deals with your involvement in the horn arrangements on that album.

Yeah, that wasn't the first moment, but it was close. The first time was when Bruce had asked me to come in and check out his new song, "Born to Run." I thought they were done, so of course me not knowing studio etiquette in those days — I mean if somebody's playing you something that's finished, you basically say, "Great, see you later."

Well, I pointed out something in the record that I thought was a screw-up and I was right. It changed the whole record.

What was it?

I don't want to say. It was a big moment, because I think people started to realize that I was more than just a friend hanging around, that I also had some insights. Of course his manager never spoke to me again after this because I probably cost him another \$20,000 to fix it. (laughs) But anyway, that was the first time for me. And then when they were making the album (*Born to Run*) they were having trouble with the horns on "Tenth Avenue Freeze-Out," and I happened to be there.

What was the problem?

They had a basic arrangement that didn't quite feel right and I knew how to fix it.

And you did.

Yeah.

Was there any time back then in the mid-'70s that you had real ambitions to become a producer?

Yeah, I guess so. Specifically, at that point I wanted to produce Bruce. And I basically used the Jukes as a training ground or school, which sounds a little cold, but the Jukes didn't really exist, exactly. It was weird. I mean, it was my band as much as it was Johnny's. When I left, that could have been the end of it. They (the Jukes) could have still been there at the Pony. Johnny wasn't exactly sure he wanted to be a bandleader. So at the point it was basically a feeling of, "Hey, what do we have to lose? Let's have some fun." I think everybody had that attitude.

As much as you've been a producer, you're also an artist in your own right. Where does that part of your career stand these days?

Well, my music went off in a very weird direction, and I just let it go. I wanted it to evolve any way it wanted to. My last record (*Revolution*) was so bizarre, I didn't even

release it in America. It was like a funk-dance record with not a hint of rock 'n' roll. I thought that if I released it here it would really confuse people. So I only released it in Europe. I got one more record in the solo deal for Europe. When I get around to do that, I'm not sure. But I want to make it the last political record I do and close off that chapter of my life. In the meantime, I plan to put together a straight ahead rock 'n' roll band. Straight songs, no politics. Two guitars, bass, drums, and a singer. I just want to play guitar. That's my next move as soon as I find a singer. Until then, I'm going to just keep producing.

Is there any chance that you'll play with Bruce again?

It's always possible, sure. But I'm sure he knows what he's going to do.

You said that you plan to put an end to the political aspects of your career. Why?

We could spend hours on that one. The fight, obviously, is never done. But my struggle to understand what's going on in the world is done. I figured it out. I know what's happening in the big picture, and when I want, I can find out what's happening in the little picture. Everything I learned, I learned in the past seven years. One of the most

interesting things I learned is that I was real good at figuring things out in politics.

Are you ending your relationship with politics because you're, well, burned out?

Yeah, you could say that.

Are there any regrets? You spent a lot of time fighting apartheid and injustice and rallying forces in support of Native Americans.

No, there's no regrets. There's definitely no regrets. *To think that you played a part in world politics, that you spoke at the United Nations, that you*

brought rock 'n' roll onto the world political stage must give you a great sense of satisfaction, even if it did drain you.

Well, one of the things I wanted to do was bring a little respect to rock 'n' roll. We have always been, you know, the black sheep, and, don't get me wrong, we like that. But, at the same time, I remember everybody asking me what I was going to wear when I was asked to speak at the U.N. I said that I was going to wear what I wear every other day. I definitely had in my mind the whole idea of prejudice. I mean, the one consistent prejudice that exists on this planet is the one against rock 'n' roll, especially the visual appearance of people in rock 'n' roll. I understand prejudice so well because I experience it every day of my life with the way I dress. Everywhere I go, I experience it. It doesn't matter what country, what city, what restaurant. I get the look. And I want to fight it.

Are you saying you dress the way you dress for its confrontational value?

That's a long story. It's really another whole interview. You know, for me, the whole thing's a paradox because I'm a person who likes to be invisible. I don't like to be in the spotlight. But I feel most comfortable looking the way I look. It's a weird paradox.

You realize, I'm sure, that because of the political route you took in the '80s, your career as a rock 'n' roll artist suffered deeply.

It did suffer.

The E Street Jukes

"I wanted to produce Bruce. And I basically used the Jukes as a training ground or school, which sounds a little cold, but the Jukes didn't really exist, exactly . . . I mean, it was my band as much as it was Johnny's."

— Little Steven

There were record company people who wouldn't touch you because of what you stood for.

That's very true. But you get to a point in life where you wonder how you ought to measure a person. I'm sure you heard that old expression, you know, you can best measure a man by what he does under pressure, under duress. That's not true. The true measure of a person is what he does with success. At the time when I started all this I felt very successful. Whether I was or not, that's another discussion. But I felt very, very successful. I started looking around and saying to myself, "What am I going to be, a German in the '30s watching Jews go to the ovens and look the other way?" I couldn't do that. So I decided to learn as much as I could about what's going on and I planned to talk about it.

But you never were a political person as a youth.

Never. I didn't go to college. I wasn't interested in politics, not even a little bit. I wasn't interested in anything but rock 'n' roll and getting laid since the time I could walk. That tunnel vision remained until I was a success. A funny thing happens when you reach your dreams. It's a very weird thing. I mean, how many people actually attain their dreams? We (Springsteen and the E Street Band) did it. So what happens then? The tunnel vision fades away, and all of a sudden, you're standing on a mountaintop.

Did you feel some sort of social responsibility as well as a responsibility to yourself?

To myself. If anything got accomplished socially, if I educated a few people or helped some situation out, that was icing on the cake. That wasn't the real purpose. I believe everyone is motivated by self-interest. It was my self-interest that made me learn and grow and find that common ground within myself and other people and talk about that stuff. There's a spiritual reward that goes with it. The only time I really ever felt alive was when I was in the middle of that struggle. All of a sudden your brain is working in ways that you never even dreamed of. You're trying to figure out the politics of a situation where there's a thousand factions and a lot of disinformation. There's a language barrier you have to deal with, and the decision you make may cause lives if you support the wrong side or say the wrong thing. Man, that's being alive. It's a whole different feeling. But in the end, I did it for me. Two things happened, though. The first was I got tired of it, I realized that politics was a totally different career from rock 'n' roll. And it was a tough one.

You know, I'm ready to have some fun now, which is why I want to put this new band together. I wanna have fun, which is something I haven't had in a long time. The other thing is that I realized having finally gotten comfortable in the spotlight, I really didn't like it. I needed to do it, not just in politics but in rock 'n' roll, too. By 1987, which was the year I did my third tour with my band, I was fronting the band and playing little guitar. I could do it. And when it came to politics, I had to go out front. But by 1989, I was ready to walk away from the front-man thing. That's why I won't be the front-man in my new band, and that's why it's taking me so long to get this band together. I've got to find the right person, the right singer.

Will you call the group, Little Steven and the Disciples of Soul?

No, it'll have a new name. It'll be a band name. I've always been a band-kind-of-a-guy. If I walk into a situation that's not a band situation, I'm going to turn it into one. That's just the way I am.

Is there any chance of you joining the Jukes on the road and actually playing in the band while your new one materializes?

No. You know, it's a funny thing. I'm known as a rock 'n' roll guitar player, yet I've never made a rock 'n' roll record in my life. With Bruce, we got into some rock 'n' roll areas, but that was always a little more keyboards-oriented than I would have preferred. But I've never done a traditional rock 'n' roll record, just like I've never done a blues record. I mean, I grew up with blues and rock 'n' roll. By the time I got into the recording studio for the first time, I was moving on to other things. But now I want to return to rock 'n' roll; I want to make that rock 'n' roll record. I've been in the mood to do this for a year and a half now. Believe it or not, I've looked at more than 300 singers and I haven't found the right one yet. I'm looking for a sixties kind of rock 'n' roll singer. You know, a white guy who sounds white. No matter how much someone tries to sound black, I want somebody who can't do it. I don't necessarily want the Great Voice. I want someone with an attitude more than a great voice, somebody like Roger Daltrey, Mick Jagger, Jim Morrison, even.

Talking about rock 'n' roll, the album you're currently producing for Charlie Sexton's new band, the Arc Angels, is, from what I've heard, straight ahead rock 'n' roll.

Yeah, you're right. It's the first rock 'n' roll I've ever produced.

You said Bruce was the first artist you really ever wanted to produce. Is the desire to produce one of his records still there?

When I left Bruce, I felt the same way I did when I left the Jukes, which was basically, that I had done it. I felt that Bruce's thing was going in a direction that I felt totally comfortable with. Now, of course, Bruce has gone off and explored some other things. So, I don't know. It would depend on what he wanted me to do.

Suppose he came to you and said, "Produce my next record."

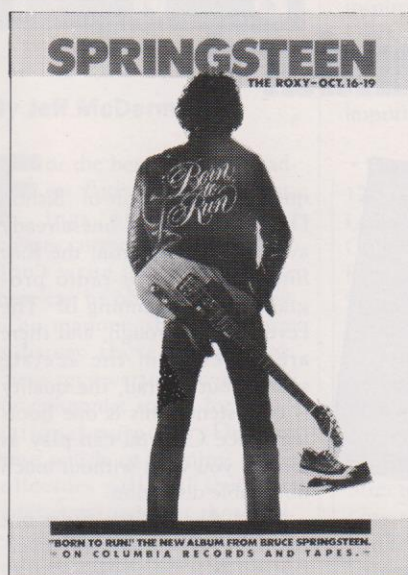
I'd do it, sure. I'm always there for him, no matter what he wants. But I think it's more plausible now than I think it has been since *Born in the USA*. I did the first two-thirds of that record, which was done in 1982. Working with him again would be fun. I love working with Bruce. It was fun getting together with him on the Jukes' record. I don't see him as much as I'd like to. But, sure, it would be fun to work with him again. I mean, he's a great singer, he's got great ideas, he could pick up any instrument. If you listen to "All the Way Home," (Springsteen's contribution to *Better Days*), that's all Bruce. I think he played everything except the drums and the bass.

You were the catalyst who brought the whole Better Days project to fruition. You were the one who lined up the deal, the musicians, the one who brought Springsteen into the project. You have a special talent for doing things like that.

I do. I've always played that role. I've always been the link. The same thing in politics. In South Africa, I was talking to all the factions. The same thing with the Native American situation. It's something I just do without thinking about it. In the old days, when I was with Bruce, everyone would come to me, whether it was another band member or a member of the crew. When they didn't want to bother Bruce with something, they came to me. Most of the time I could solve it, whatever the problem was.

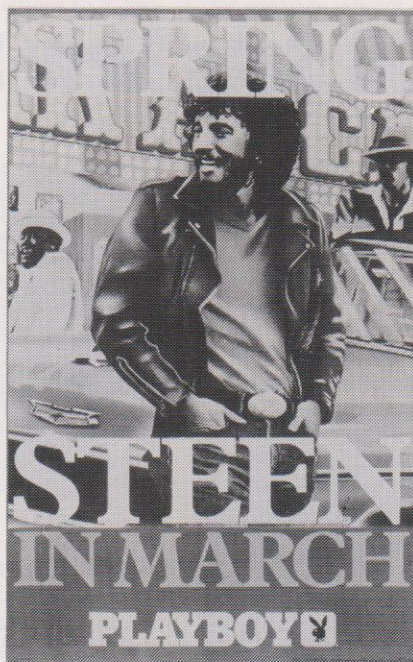
I don't impose very much of my will in most situations. But the one area that I would say my presence is definitely felt in is a band situation. I mean, when I walk into a room, if it ain't a band or if it ain't a family, it's gonna be. ♣

ROXY '75 POSTER



The classic. These were wheatpasted all over Los Angeles before Bruce's landmark run of shows there in 1975. Somehow, we have managed to find a few that are in remarkable condition. Printed on an off-white 27" x 41" sheet, the gorgeous shot of Bruce by Eric Meola is complemented by the script printing of "Born to Run" on his coat. Original copies of this poster have never been in circulation, even among prominent collectors. Be warned, however, that there are smaller bootleg versions of this (and the similar Bottom Line '75 poster). These are the real thing, genuine, and completely original. Very few remain. The price: \$100 plus \$8 shipping for US, \$15 overseas

1976 PLAYBOY POSTER



In March of 1976, *Playboy* did a full length feature on Bruce Springsteen and his new-found success. A month before, they produced this poster to promote the issue. Few of these gems remain, as the poster wasn't shipped to record stores and Bruce wasn't all that popular at the time. Artist John Youssi rendered the stunning illustration of Bruce leaning on a Cadillac. Spectacular colors, and the condition is M- or better. The price: \$200, plus \$8 shipping for US, \$15 overseas.

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SONGBOOKS

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Includes the words and music to the entire *Born to Run* LP and 13 incredible black and white shots of Bruce not used elsewhere. There are classic off-stage shots from '74-'75 of Bruce playing pool, hangin' at the Palace and more. A handsome volume. **\$9.95**

The River

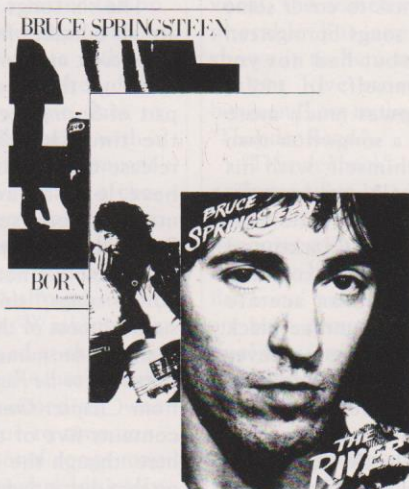
Absolutely stunning photos from *The River* tour, plus an alternate from the "chain-link fence" sessions and the Eric Meola shot of Bruce in front of the convenience store/gas station that was considered as the cover for *Darkness*. Out of print and very cool. **\$30**

Nebraska

Also out of print, this is a great book for a beginner. Several moody shots of Bruce by David Kennedy and others, plus shots not unlike those shown in the "Atlantic City" video. **\$15**

Born in the USA

Eighty pages of lyrics and music including "Pink Cadillac." Again, includes some great off-stage photos not reproduced elsewhere, including one of Bruce driving his Corvette. **\$6.95**



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Bootleg CD Sets New Standard

By Lynn Elder

• **Forgotten Songs**
(Travelling Productions)
Packaging: 2
Sound Quality: 9
Performance: 10

This is the first Springsteen bootleg to be mastered from an acetate and the results are utterly amazing. *Forgotten Songs* is the single best sounding CD of Springsteen studio material, and thus puts this release on a par with *You Mean So Much to Me* and *Born in the Studio* in the top five of all Bruce bootleg releases.

An acetate is a studio reference recording, frequently containing unreleased or alternate tracks, pressed onto a heavy metal or vinyl platter. It is made before a record is mastered and allows the artist and producers to hear what studio tapes will sound like once they are put to vinyl, a process that can greatly change how a song sounds. Acetates are usually made directly from studio tapes; consequently, the fidelity and frequency response on these recordings are top notch.

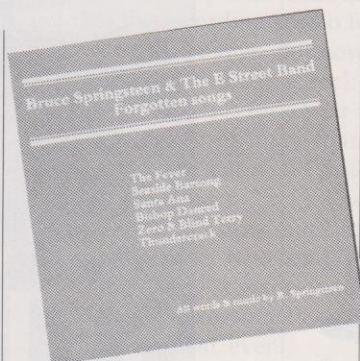
Since they are made for reference and not for release, acetates are extremely rare and they show wear after only a handful of plays. Because they are usually made out of a metal alloy, rather than flexible vinyl, acetates are very fragile and most are damaged or destroyed before they ever make it out of the studio.

There are three reasons a producer or artist may make an acetate: for an early songwriting reference; to check the sound on a finished track; and finally, to check the sound on a finished product ready to be mastered to vinyl. The process of making a master and pressing an album on vinyl is very expensive and is only done when you need many thousand copies. When you need only a handful of copies of a song, acetates are the cheapest route.

In the field of Bruce Springsteen collecting, acetates represent some of the rarest and most sought after collectibles, since very few legitimate Springsteen acetates have ever been put on the market. With the exception of actual studio tapes, acetates represent the best quality available of unreleased tracks. Considering Springsteen's typical process of recording three songs for every one he eventually releases, it comes as no surprise that many acetates exist of unreleased Springsteen songs and that these are extremely valuable. (It should also be noted that a growing number of counterfeit acetates are being sold lately so buyers should beware of unscrupulous dealers. When you play a real acetate the sound quality should be better than a regular record, although with more pops and clicks.)

Forgotten Songs was mastered from a famous six track acetate that English producer Adrian Rudge put his name on in 1974. Rudge ran a company called Intersongs and he was attempting to interest British and European performers to cover some of the many songs Springsteen had written but had not yet released himself. In 1974, Springsteen was much more successful as a songwriter than as an artist himself, with his songs eventually getting covered by many British performers including Allan Clarke and Manfred Mann. These six songs were pressed on an acetate complete with a unique black and silver album cover never used anywhere else. Rudge had a handful made and then shopped them around to other performers. Little Bob Story eventually covered "Seaside Bar Song" and Southside Johnny went on to release "The Fever," but Rudge's efforts in Britain on Bruce's behalf were fruitless.

Only a few of the six song acetates exist (and there are even fewer copies of a two song



version featuring just "The Fever" and "Seaside Bar Song"). A copy recently went up for auction in England, sold for thousands of dollars, and the result is this disc. *Forgotten Songs* is an encouraging sign because it represents one of the first times a bootlegger has actually shelled out big bucks for material, as opposed to the usual practice of releasing the first (and usually poorest quality) version of a tape that's around and, more important, that's free. The disc also appears to have been remastered since hiss is at a minimum, but most of the sound quality can be attributed to the fact that an excellent source was used.

The six songs featured here are all outtakes from *The Wild, the Innocent, and the E Street Shuffle*. Although they were frequently part of Springsteen's live set at the time, he chose not to release them; many early fans have long argued that this material represents some of Bruce's best. Despite the disc's title, these are not exactly "forgotten songs," since other versions of most of these songs are available on numerous bootleg titles. *Fire on the Fingertips* on CD, from Chapter One Recordings, contains five of the six songs here, though the sound quality on that disc is awful.

Of the six songs, "The Fever," "Seaside Bar Song," and "Zero and Blind Terry" are the real standouts. "Bishop Dance" and "Thundercrack" are actually live recordings and there is a noticeable drop off in sound

quality (this version of "Bishop Dance" is also the one already available on CD from the *King Biscuit Flower Hour* radio program). The beginning of "The Fever" is a bit rough, and there are clicks from the acetate source, but overall, the quality is consistent. This is one bootleg Bruce CD you can play as loud as you want without much noticeable distortion.

This disc sounds great but has some shortcomings nevertheless. First, clocking in at 32 minutes, this disc is inordinately short. Although other material of this quality is hard to find, it does exist (like the live version of "Spirit in the Night," also from the *King Biscuit* radio show). And if the sound quality can be said to represent a new high, the packaging certainly represents a new low, with no picture on the cover (there is one color shot, probably from England in 1975, inside the insert). Thankfully, the correct song titles for these songs are listed here as opposed to the confusing and often ridiculous titles repeated over the years by bootleggers (calling "Santa Ana" "Guns of Kid Cole," for example).

Forgotten Songs is a step in the right direction, and is one of the most listenable Springsteen boots ever produced. The use of a primary source should be applauded. Still, the overall quality of Springsteen CDs compared to those of other artists (consider the Who's *From Lifehouse to Leeds* or the Beatles' *Unsursurpassed Masters*, also mastered from sources close to the original tapes, if not the tapes themselves) leaves a great deal to be desired. Eventually, Springsteen bootleggers will get smart and make a disc from actual studio or soundboard tapes (a step above even an acetate) and the quality of a release like that would make even this admirable effort seem less noteworthy. But for now, it doesn't get better than this. 🍌

ON COLLECT I N G

By Jeff McDermott

For the benefit of our readers, *Backstreets* provides ratings of unauthorized releases currently in circulation. Don't write us asking where these can be obtained. *Backstreets* in no manner, shape, or form endorses these recordings. These reviews are provided by our columnist solely for informational purposes. Despite these words of warning, some collectors will still seek this material out, and for those collectors, our reviews should help you steer clear of the real losers.

Unauthorized CDs are growing in numbers and with that growth, expect some real rip-offs — our word of advice is let the buyer beware, and demand to listen to material before you buy it. Each title here has been rated for packaging, performance and sound quality on a scale of one to ten, one being awful, and ten being quality generally found in legitimate releases.



• Independence Day

(Great Dane Records)

Packaging: 8

Sound Quality: 4

Performance: 5

Despite the 16 page booklet with full-color photos and reprints of reviews of the European 1985 tour, this is still only an average audience recording. As such, it should be a candidate for remastering and re-release on GDR's Masters Plus Series. This version features poor frequency response, and, as a result, even the powerful "Trapped" comes off as a weak performance. Although Little Steven is billed on the package as a special guest, he only

appears for a few songs at the end of the show. Bruce gives inspired introductions to "Glory Days," "Cover Me," and "Can't Help Falling in Love," but even these do not justify the steep import prices.

• Down the Road a Piece

12/17/71 Rutgers University
Ledge Bar/New Brunswick, NJ
Golden Star Records

Packaging: 7

Sound Quality: 5

Performance: 8

This show is by the Bruce Springsteen Band, which at the time included 3 female back-up singers, a trumpet and saxophone, and soon-to-be E Streeters Danny Federici, Vini Lopez, Steve Van Zandt, David Sancious, and Garry Tallent. Extended guitar solos abound in this 71 minute collection of mostly originals. For what amounts to an historical performance due to the short existence of this band, it is a shame that it is a poor audience recording rather than a soundboard like some of the Steel Mill CDs. The packaging consists only of a 4 page black and white booklet, but the track listing and band members are listed on the back cover and on the CD.

Of note is a superb cover of "CC Rider," which starts as a slow blues number then turns funky. Another early treasure is "You Mean So Much to Me," performed in a faster tempo than later E Street Band performances but complete with the back-up singers. Another of the better tracks is "Goin' Back to Georgia," which begins with a beautiful solo piano accompaniment. After a verse and a chorus, Bruce reverts to the more rocking arrangement used during Steel Mill performances a year earlier. Although other songs such as "Walking the Dog" were played at the show, they are not on the disc because the source recording was incomplete. Due to time constraints, additional songs may have proven technologically prohibitive.

Due to poor sound quality and plain packaging, this would normally earn only a single star. Since this is otherwise unavailable and documents an early part of Bruce's career, it merits

two stars. Still, Golden Star Records seems to have a knack for releasing inferior sets.

• Fire on the Fingertips

Various Demos/Live 1972-1974
(Chapter One Digital Recordings)

Packaging: 5

Sound Quality: 5

Performance: 8

This 38 minute CD, mastered off a vinyl boot, is the latest from Chapter One Digital Recordings (a label thus far without distinction). This title features some killer early material but in lower quality than



previously available on vinyl. For the new Bruce fan, however, there is great stuff like "Santa Ana" and "Bishop Dance," during which Bruce urges Dan Federici to "get funky" during the jam in the song. Perhaps the best track on this set is "Zero and Blind Terry" which was previously available as an instrumental demo on *Born in the Studio*. Here, the demo is complete with vocal; the sometimes indecipherable but explicit lyric shows it to be a moving but violent love story, a cross between "Lost in the Flood" and "Thunder Road."

"Thundercrack" is also here, performed live in addition to a couple John Hammond demos in poorer sound quality than on *The Early Years Vol. II*. "Seaside Bar Song" and "Thunder Road" are both demos but the sound quality is muffled. Both are available in pristine quality on the aforementioned *Born in the Studio*.

Although the songs on this CD are incredible, the sound quality here is scratchy. If you have this material on vinyl, don't bother with the CD unless you really want it on the digital format. The packaging does not really help either, consisting of a couple of photos

from over a dozen years after the songs were recorded.

Perhaps Chapter One Digital Sound should consider changing their name. If so, I would suggest Chapter Eleven Digital Sound.

• You Better Not Touch:

The Complete Guide to Bruce Springsteen on Bootleg Compact Disc by Lynn Elder

If you collect Bruce bootleg CDs, you should spring the \$10 for this 80 page booklet. *You Better Not Touch* describes over 70 titles. It may be more expensive than any of the 3 vinyl Bruce bootleg guides, but this volume covers 90% of the titles available as of late summer. Furthermore, it is far more accurate than than any of the vinyl guides in its track listings and it even provides a brief description of the individual tracks in addition to information on packaging and summary of the set. All titles feature black and white photos of the cover, and the rating system is identical to that used in *Backstreets*.

The best part is that the



reviews in this publication are original. While author Elder reviews nearly all of the titles reviewed in this column, *YBNT* has an entirely new point of view, and, in fact, includes several titles that have not been covered here. An excellent 6 page introduction discusses the bootleg CD industry and defines the rating system; the remainder of the book consists of 1 page reviews per title.

This book is highly recommended due to its breadth of titles covered, consistency of ratings, and level of detail provided. There are great sets and some awful ones; *You Better Not Touch* is essential to avoid getting ripped off by the latter. 🐉

Chimes of Freedom re-released

New Southside Imports

Southside Johnny and the Asbury Jukes' new album, *Better Days*, is just that for the collector. While the album itself was issued in the US and Europe, there have been supplemental releases in Great Britain that are worth pursuing. The first item is the UK 7" for "It's Been a Long Time," which includes a version edited slightly to make the tune more palatable for airplay. The b-side, "Shake 'em Down," is culled from the album. Not releasing a non-lp b-side on the first single seems rather curious, for it would have generated far more initial interest among fans and collectors. A subsequent release of an outtake or a live track is unlikely, though it seems to make sense that a second single might make use of the live version of "It's Been a Long Time" from the Stone Pony show with Bruce Springsteen and Little Steven. Similarly, a CD5 also released in the UK features the album version of the single in addition to those found on the 7".

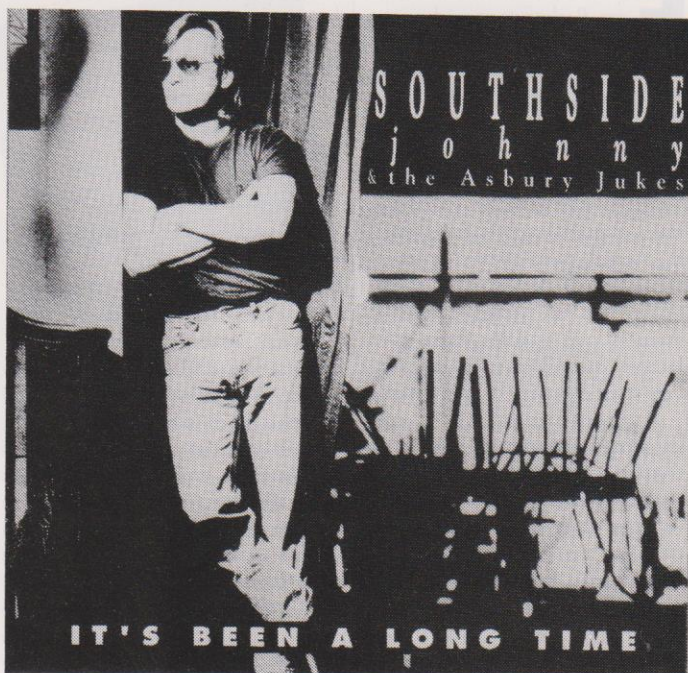
In the US, meanwhile, Impact Records released a promo-only CD5 of "It's Been a Long Time" entitled *Juke Up!* In an unusual arrangement, both versions of the song appear four times on the one disc. Although the packaging for this is unremarkable, the fold-out insert includes a short piece about the album and some comments from Southside. A radio promo was also issued, this time with the two versions of the single but without an insert.

Killer Joe's album *Scene of the Crime* was released in the US in the fall and boasts a star-studded line-up of Jersey shore musicians. In addition to the mainstays, keyboardist "Killer" Joe Delia and E Street Band drummer Max Weinberg, guests include Little Steven, Southside Johnny, Jon Bon Jovi, Branford Marsalis, and Benmont Tench (of Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers). The twelve cuts on

the album include two Springsteen compositions, "Summer on Signal Hill" and "Club Soul City." Both songs, previously released in the early 80s (as the b-side to a Clarence Clemons single and on Gary US Bonds' album *On the Line*, respectively), are given a new coat of paint by Joe, Max, and friends. Little Steven, for example, plays a stunning solo on "Summer on Signal Hill," while Phoebe Snow contributes a new vocal on "Club Soul City." Also released on Hard Ticket was a CD5 of "Summer on Signal Hill," the proceeds from which went to Big Brothers and Big Sisters of America.

The only new releases that involve Bruce Springsteen are of marked interest but rather difficult to track down. The first item is the Japanese *Rock Best 100 Artists Vol. VIII*, which includes "Born to Run." Other artists on this compilation are Eric Clapton, Queen, and Aerosmith. The new Columbia Christmas compilation, *'Tis the Sampler*, features 16 holiday tunes, including Springsteen's "Santa Claus is Comin' to Town." The only other place to find this on CD is the UK "Tunnel of Love" single, which now commands a hefty price of well over \$100. As a result, expect *'Tis the Sampler* to be snapped up quickly by collectors.

In a surprise move, Columbia has re-released the *Chimes of Freedom* EP as a CD5, originally issued in 1988 as a CD3. Included are live versions of "Chimes of Freedom," "Tougher than the Rest," "Be True," and the acoustic "Born to Run." Whether the guitar solo that was edited out of "Tougher" will be put back in remains to be seen. When the CD3 was released, many Springsteen fans were dismayed by the editing job. Columbia reported that it was done because of time limitations that were an inherent part of the



Southside's US promotional CD, *Juke Up!*

now-dead format. The options were to either delete a song entirely or to edit one slightly. Since a four-track CD5 poses no such problem, Columbia clearly ought to issue the unabridged version.

The packaging for the CD3 was nothing to write home about, looking more like a plaid handkerchief than a Springsteen disc. Again, Columbia has a rare opportunity to right its ways. Expect the artwork issued on the vinyl EP to be used for the CD5.


Before the second coming of this title, the unedited digital "Tougher" was available only as an import on the Austrian CD3 and the Japanese *Tunnel of Love Express Tour I* CD3. Both have been out of print for some time now.

Highlights of the King Biscuit Flower Hour have been released in a multi-volume set. While the sets have yet to include either "Bishop Dance" or "Spirit in the Night" from Max's Kansas City, Manfred Mann's live version of the latter was recently released on *Best of*

King Biscuit Live Vol. III on Sandstone Records.

Nils Lofgren collectors should pick up a new CD5 from Rykodisc. "Trouble's Back," a song from *Silver Lining*, is complemented by live versions of the classic Lofgren song "Keith Don't Go" and "Just A Little." Both of the tracks were recorded at in May at the Birchmere in Alexandria, Virginia.

John Prine's new album, *The Missing Years*, includes a guest appearance from Bruce Springsteen on the track "Take a Look at My Heart." In addition to Springsteen, other guests include Phil Everly, Bonnie Raitt, and Tom Petty, Benmont Tench, and Mike Campbell of the Heartbreakers. Rounding out the group's involvement is Howie Epstein, who produced the album. If you can't find it, you can write to Prine's label, Oh Boy Records, P.O. Box 36099, Los Angeles, CA. 90036-0099.

After a lengthy delay, Razor and Tie Records will release Gary US Bonds' *On the Line* on CD at the end of January. 

CLASSIFIEDS

PERSONALS

TO KAY WINOVER, MY BRUCE TRAMP MOTHER: thank you for introducing me to Springsteen years ago! Love, Jack.

GOTTA HAVE MY BRUCE JUICE! NEED INFO/TICKETS for any East Coast location. Please help! (718) 966-5751. Michelle or Jeff.

LITTLE STEVEN: PLEASE GO ON TOUR WITH SOUTHSIDE. Better Days is a fucking triumph. You are both at your best when you are working with each other. Among the believers, Bert Haughin, Phoenixville, PA.

WHAT'S UP JOHN? IT'S SEPTEMBER, NO SHOWS, no hotline, no record, no fun. Love, Debbie. Please FAX me, hard, at (609) 265-9591, with some info. I'll do anything for Santana.

CRAIG AND LISA: OUT OF SIGHT, OUT OF MIND hasn't been the case. It has been busy, miss you guys. Call us when possible (718) 241-3548. Your Bruce pals, Michael and Natalina.

HELLO WORLD! DARREN, URSULA, WHAT'S UP? TO the female tramps who wrote, thanks! To the ones who didn't, write! Johnny, 5200 Lindermann Ave., Racine, WI 53406.

THANKS TO ALL OF THE MANY "SOUL ENGINES" fans who've requested CDs, tapes, and to be on the mailing list. Don't miss your chance to hear New Jersey's best new band, "Soul Engines." Call Darren Scarpa, (201) 339-3289 or write me at 175 W. 48th Street, Apt. 14D, Bayonne, NJ 07002-2170. John Huck, call me! I've lost your number. Oh, to be in love with a Jersey Girl! Laura, I love you, heart and soul.

WANTED

SPRINGSTEEN COLLECTOR WANTS TO TRADE OR buy Bruce rarities: tapes, magazines, photos, videos, tickets, anything wanted. Your list gets mine. Jordi Comerma, C/ Esbart de Vic No. 10, 08500 VIC, (Barcelona), SPAIN.

DAVID SANCIOUS — ARTICLES, COLLECTIBLES, and correspondence sought concerning his years as a solo artist. Paul Staunton, 191 Gordon Ave., Totowa, NJ 07512.

PHOTOS: ANY TOUR AND ANY QUALITY. BUY OR trade. Lassi Eskola, Vahianityntie, 19A1, Helsinki, Finland.

SPRINGSTEEN TAPES TO TRADE. YOUR LIST GETS mine. Susan Bowles, 1300 S. Church #E8, Jonesboro, Arkansas 72401.

BRUCE VIDEOS TO TRADE. BRUCE CONCERTS, posters xerox wanted. Have tapes. Olivier Martin, Kergouach, 56250 St. Nolf, France.

WANTED: COPY OF BEAVER BROWN'S "ROAD-house" on compact disc. Dale Pavli, 503 Carriage Drive, Orange, CT 06477.

SPRINGSTEEN AND SOUTHSIDE TAPES FOR TRADE. Your list gets mine. Greg Dempsey 118 G Sunny Lane, Torrington, CT 06790.

COLLECTOR LOOKING FOR BRUCE PINS/BUTTONS. Send sale lists to: Jack Winover, 3401 Fairpark Blvd. #F-303, Little Rock, Arkansas 72204.

WANTED: "IN CONCERT" TAPE 11/01/91 WITH Springsteen. Greg, 8303 163rd Ave. NE, Lake Stevens, WA 98258.

HAVE YOU TAPED SPRINGSTEEN? THE WHO? U2? Let's trade 1st gen. for 1st gen. Huge collection of masters. JEMS, PO Box 11081, Tacoma, WA 98411. We won't sell tapes under any circumstances.

FOR SALE

MASSIVE BRUCE COLLECTION FOR SALE. INCLUDES all early issues of Backstreets, Newsweek from '75, early foreign singles, live LPs, 12 inchers, posters, promo stuff. All for auction, no minimum bid. Free list. Send a SASE with 2 stamps to Bruce list, D. Cox, 528 1/2 N. Sweetzer, Los Angeles, CA 90048.

OVER 60 DIFFERENT BRUCE MAGAZINES FOR SALE. SASE for list. Nebraska, PO Box 3064, Omaha, Nebraska 68103.

BUMPERSTICKERS! "I'D RATHER BE BRUCE-ING!" B&W, sneaker logo, \$2 each, cash and SASE to: "Just Bruce," PO Box 290027, Brooklyn, NY 11229-0001.

RATES

CLASSIFIED RATES: RATES ARE \$1 A WORD for each word with 10 words or \$10 minimum for all commercial ads, trades, wants, for sales or tape trades. Ads that have no commercial intent, including pen pals, messages and the like are only 50 cents a word, ten word minimum. No ads selling bootleg or unauthorized materials will be accepted. Write for display advertising rates. Backstreets assumes no responsibility for any advertising in the magazine. Please write our Consumer Services Department if you have any problems with an advertiser. Send all ads to Classifieds, Backstreets, PO Box 51225, Seattle, WA 98115, or call us at 206-728-7603 to charge your ad.

BRUCE MAGS, INCLUDING 1975 TIME AND NEWS-week. SASE for list. Lloyd Brewer, 1750 Gaylord #2, Denver, Colorado 80206.

VERY RARE ALL-BRUCE INSERT TO ASBURY PARK Press, 8/18/85. Full-page photo, rare Bruce trivia. \$75 original; \$5 xeroxed. Faith Quintavell, 1929 Sansom, Philadelphia, PA 19103.

PRIVATE COLLECTION, RARE SPRINGSTEEN ITEMS. Gold Record, tour jacket, more. Send SASE for list. Glen Smith, 9 Ruffleg Circle, Denver, PA 17517.

SPRINGSTEEN GRENADA STAMPS. OFFICIAL RE-lease. One pose. \$4 each, 10 for \$25. East End Lights, Box 760, New Baltimore, MI 48047.

FROG HEAVEN, THE HUMOROUS ROCK 'N' ROLL fanzine that Wendy Lucas of the Beaver Brown fan club calls "a riot." \$6.95 payable to: Tenth Teardrop, PO Box 3251, Pasco, WA 99392-3251.

SPRINGSTEEN COLLECTION. FOR LIST SEND SASE. Rose, PO Box 34752, Phoenix, AZ 85067.

NILS LOFGREN MAGAZINE CRY TOUGH (IN ENGLISH) featuring exclusive fan club interview with Nils. \$7 per copy from Susanne Cernic, Koenigsberger Platz 6 7034 Gaertringen, West Germany.

RAMROD FANZINE. FOUR ISSUES A YEAR. SUB-scriptions: \$14 Europe, \$16 rest of the world. #1 is out. Eduard Farres, Forn 33, 08208, Sabadell, Barcelona, Spain.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

Expect the debut album of another shore outfit, Mr. Reality, to be out around the same time. The band is signed to SBK Records, along with the Red House, one of the Shore's best young bands, and a pop artist with definite Shore roots, Francesca Beghe.

Bruce Tunkel of the Red House reports that the group is presently writing songs for the follow-up to its critically acclaimed self-titled debut, released in 1990. Beghe's self-titled debut was released last summer. Longtime Shore fans will remember the attractive singer as the lead vocalist in bands such as the Stigalators and 50/50, both of which worked the Stone Pony in the early and mid '80s.

Expect one of the Shore's great late '60s bands, the Downtown Tangiers Band, to

reunite soon. Its three main members, bass player Garry Tallent and keyboards player Danny Federici of the E Street Band, plus guitarist Billy Chin-nock, have been recording in Virginia Beach. Word has it that the band is close to signing a contract with Warner Brothers. The original Downtown Tangiers Band also included keyboardist David Sancious and drummer Vini Lopez. Both musicians, as well as Tallent and Federici, went on to play with Springsteen in the first edition of the E Street Band.

Speaking of Sancious, he celebrated a homecoming of sorts in September when he played the Garden State Arts Center with Sting. When Sting announced that Sancious was a product of the Jersey Shore music scene, Sancious's long-time fans in the audience gave him a warm welcome. 🍻

Hotline Number to Change

The *Backstreets Hotline* phone number will change on February 15, 1992. The new number is stamped on the insert that comes with all subscriber's copies of this issue. As always, the Hotline number is unlisted, so you must be a current subscriber to get it.

The number of calls to the Hotline has increased recently. Once again, it registers more calls per week than there are subscribers. During the last tour, some irresponsible radio stations gave the number out.

Backstreets provides the Hotline free of charge for all subscribers (SuperSubs have a separate number that will not change at this time).

During the last tour, the Hotline provided information on ticket sales and shows around the world. Numerous

subscribers wrote to tell us that our reports helped them get great tickets. The Hotline is updated by 3 pm (Pacific Time) each Monday, and whenever news breaks.

Current subscribers who can't find the new number can drop us a self-addressed stamped envelope and we'll mail it to you.

We're sorry for the inconvenience, but we're sure that you will appreciate having this service provided only to current subscribers, which should make it easier to get through. It's always easier to get through to the line late at night, or early in the morning. There are fewer callers then and long distance charges are cheaper then.

If you have any questions regarding the *Backstreets Hotline*, please call us. 🍻

The Backstreets Subscriber Bulletin Board

To use any of the subscriber services listed here, simply complete the appropriate section(s) and mail entire coupon (or xerox or facsimile) to: BACKSTREETS, Subscriber Services, PO Box 51225, Seattle, WA 98115. Allow 6 weeks for processing.

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WINTER 1992

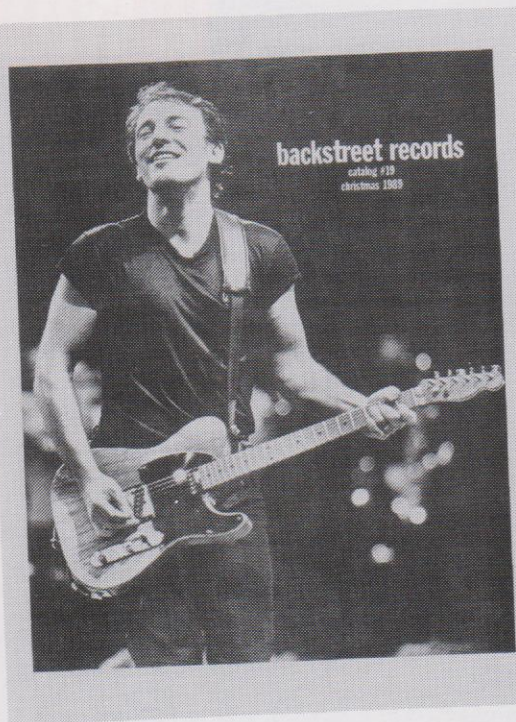
THE BACKSTREETS COLLECTION 1-9



The first nine issues of Backstreets are completely sold-out, and valued at over \$200. But don't worry, you can get a reprint of the first nine issues of Backstreets, including the impossible to find issue number one. Over 100 pages of great Bruce information, all in one volume. This item was printed for distribution with the Backstreets book, and we're now offering our remaining supply for only \$12 each plus \$3 shipping (\$5 shipping per copy overseas). Send check, money order or credit card info to:

BACKSTREET RECORDS
PO Box 51219
Seattle, WA 98115

STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND CIRCULATION			
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Quarterly		1	
269. Issue Frequency		270. Issue Number	
Quarterly		1	
271. Issue Frequency		272. Issue Number	
Quarterly		1	
273. Issue Frequency		274. Issue Number	
Quarterly		1	
275. Issue Frequency		276. Issue Number	
Quarterly		1	
277. Issue Frequency		278. Issue Number	
Quarterly		1	
279. Issue Frequency		280. Issue Number	
Quarterly		1	
281. Issue Frequency		282. Issue Number	
Quarterly		1	
283. Issue Frequency		284. Issue Number	
Quarterly		1	
285. Issue Frequency		286. Issue Number	
Quarterly		1	
287. Issue Frequency		288. Issue Number	
Quarterly		1	
289. Issue Frequency		290. Issue Number	
Quarterly		1	
291. Issue Frequency		292. Issue Number	
Quarterly		1	
293. Issue Frequency		294. Issue Number	
Quarterly		1	
295. Issue Frequency		296. Issue Number	
Quarterly		1	
297. Issue Frequency		298. Issue Number	
Quarterly		1	
299. Issue Frequency		300. Issue Number	
Quarterly		1	
301. Issue Frequency		302. Issue Number	
Quarterly		1	
303. Issue Frequency		304. Issue Number	
Quarterly		1	
305. Issue Frequency		306. Issue Number	
Quarterly		1	
307. Issue Frequency		308. Issue Number	
Quarterly		1	
309. Issue Frequency		310. Issue Number	
Quarterly		1	
311. Issue Frequency			



COLLECT THE BOSS!

Backstreet Records is your source for Bruce collectibles of every kind, from T-shirts to rare picture sleeves. Our catalog is published five times a year, and each issue is chock full of the best in Springsteen rarities. We've got all the posters, all the B-sides and an ever-growing collection of CDs as well. When you buy from Backstreet Records, you know you're getting only 100% official and authorized collectibles from all over the globe.

We pride ourselves on our service at Backstreet Records, because we're collectors ourselves and we know how collectors should be treated. We're always happy to search for your wants and answer any questions you might have about any Springsteen item. Everything we sell is backed up by a no questions asked, money back guarantee. As our customers can attest to, we offer prompt, courteous service to the US, Canada and overseas.

Besides mail order, Backstreet Records can be reached by phone or FAX for immediate orders. Our phones are answered from 10-5 Pacific time at (206) 728-7603 and our FAX line is always open at (206) 728-8827.

If you're a collector of Bruce Springsteen or related artists, this is the store and the catalog for you. To get on our mailing list, all you need to do is send \$5 in the US and Canada (or \$8 for airmail overseas) and we'll put you on for a year. You'll get five catalogs over the course of a year, including our annual Warehouse Clearance catalog which is packed with one-of-a-kind magazines, singles and LPS.

To get on the catalog list for one year, send a check, money order or your credit card information to Catalog Requests, Backstreet Records, PO Box 51219, Seattle, WA 98115. If you'd like to receive the current catalog, send \$1 in the US (\$2 overseas) to the same address and we'll rush you our latest catalog. We guarantee that you'll find our service first-rate and that our staff is ready to help you in any way they can.

BECOME A SUPERSUB

Backstreets is seeking the support of a few of our subscribers to become supporting members. It's not for everybody, but for those serious fanatics who make the Boss part of their daily life, we think it's just the answer to your Boss fix.

Many of our subscribers have asked for years if they could get the magazine first-class and in protective envelopes and they have offered to pay extra for these services. Because of the way magazines are produced, these services are very expensive and take lots of raw labor to process. But as part of our SuperSub program we're offering supporting subscribers these services and more. Adding up all the services we're offering one gets more than three times the cost of service. Because of the cost of international mail, the SuperSub can only be offered in the US.

A SuperSub entitles one to:

- **First-Class Subscription to Backstreets.** All issues of Backstreets will be mailed to you first-class the instant they come off the press. They will be mailed in protective mailing envelopes and quick and speedy delivery is guaranteed. (Normally no first-class subscriptions are available.)
- **First-Class Subscriptions to Backstreet Records Catalogs.** All Backstreet Records catalogs will be rushed to your door first-class the moment they come off the press. This speedy service will allow you to take advantage of one-of-a-kind items for sale, giving you the jump on rarities. (Normally no first-class service is available.)
- **Automatic Subscription to All Hot Sheets.** Backstreet Records publishes a Hot Sheet approximately 15 times a year updating deletions, additions and corrections to the catalogs. You will be mailed all Hot Sheets first-class allowing you first shot at any brand new items. (Normally no such service is provided.)
- **Exclusive Collectors-only Staff T-shirt.** Our SuperSubs will be supporting members of the magazine and as such we've printed up an absolutely gorgeous t-shirt exclusively for them that says "Backstreets Staff." This beautiful t-shirt will not be made available to the general public and will only be given to SuperSub members.

• **Automatic Personalized Xmas Cards.** Each year we'll ship these to show our thanks to you, along with a special "gift" each year.

• **Automatic renewal of your subscription.** You'll never need to worry about renewing again — all SuperSubs will be billed each year so continued uninterrupted service is guaranteed. (Normally we can't bill for renewals.)

• **A free personal classified ad in each issue.** All SuperSubs will be allowed one free classified (20 word limit) in each issue of Backstreets (no "for sale" ads are included in this deal — only trades, pen pals and the like). This alone is worth over \$40 a year.

• **Boss Hotline Use.** SuperSubs will get 24-hour access to all the latest breaking Boss news on their private hotline — not the same number given out to regular Backstreets subscribers. This service alone is worth its weight in gold.

The price for all these services is \$50 a year. That's a lot of money but we think the services more than make up for the cost.

This is obviously not for everyone (of course, regular subscriptions are still available), but we think this service is tailor-made for the serious Boss-aholic and will more than pay for itself in convenience and service. We can't transfer any current subscriber over to a SuperSub easily so there is no conversion but what we can do is, if you sign up for SuperSub, we can turn the rest of your present normal subscription into a gift for anyone you ask (and send them a personalized card letting them know).

To sign up for a SuperSub, send your check, money order or credit card info, along with your name, address and phone number and your t-shirt size (M, L or XL) and we'll start you off ASAP by sending your "staff" shirt, the SuperSub packet and the unlisted phone number to the Boss Hotline.

Send to SuperSubs, Backstreets Subscriber Services, PO Box 51225, Seattle, WA 98115. If you're a current normal subscriber also enclose your mailing label and let us know if you'd like us to continue your present subscription or give it as a gift to someone else.

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